

— KESSINGER'S LEGACY REPRINTS —



The Life Of Miranda V1



William Spence Robertson

THE LIFE OF MIRANDA

By WILLIAM SPENCE ROBERTSON, Ph.D.

Professor of History, University of Illinois



IN TWO VOLUMES
WITH THIRTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS
VOLUME I

CHAPEL HILL

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BY WILLIAM WALTER ROBERTSON, M.D.

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Francisco de Miranda. From a crayon portrait drawn in 1788, presumably by Heinrich Lips von Kloten. In the Lavater collection of portraits, National Bibliotek, Vienna, Austria.

TO
THE MEMORY OF
EDWARD GAYLORD BOURNE

PREFACE

SPECTACULAR AND romantic was the career of Francisco de Miranda, Precursor, Knight-Errant, and Promoter of Spanish-American liberty. He was the first cultured South American to make a tour of either the United States or Europe. His life has a unique interest because he was the only personage of his time to participate in the struggle for the independence of the Thirteen Colonies, the French Revolution, and the war for the liberation of Spanish America. It may without exaggeration be said of him that he became acquainted with, and frequently captivated, more distinguished figures of his age in both the Old World and the New than any other contemporary. General Washington, the dashing Marquis Lafayette, Haydn the Composer, the enigmatical autocrat Catherine II, William Pitt, Alexander Hamilton, the domineering General Dumouriez, Napoleon, Bernardo Riquelme, later famous as Dictator O'Higgins, the Iron Duke, Simón Bolívar, who was destined to become the Liberator of Colombia,—these and a host of others were more or less intrigued by Miranda's dynamic personality and fascinating schemes. Historically, his life is important not only because it is concerned with the attitude of world powers toward Latin America during a critical period, but also because it epitomizes the early history of a South American nation during the heroic age.

Many years have passed since I was first attracted by the life and politics and diplomacy of our southern neighbors. While an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin, studying under Professor Frederick J. Turner, I became interested in the history of Latin America. This interest was increased while I pursued graduate study at Yale University under that keen critic and intrepid scholar, Professor Edward Gaylord Bourne. In 1901 I undertook to investigate under his direction for a doctoral dissertation the revolution-

ary activities of Miranda. Expanded by materials that I subsequently gathered in the archives of Spain, in 1907 the resulting essay was awarded a moiety of the Herbert Baxter Adams Prize of the American Historical Association.

During my investigation in the English archives in 1902 I found documents which convinced me that shortly after General Miranda capitulated to the Spanish royalists in July, 1812, an extensive collection of his papers that had escaped the clutches of the Spaniards had been spirited away to London, where they were deposited in the custody of Lord Bathurst, secretary for war and the colonies. Diligent search in the Public Record Office, however, did not enable me to lay hands on the coveted papers. Hence I surmised that, according to a custom of the time by which an English minister sometimes viewed official papers that had accumulated during his term of office as private rather than public archives, Lord Bathurst had transferred the Miranda MSS. to his country seat when he went out of office in 1828.

But it was not until 1922 that I was accorded the privilege of examining the papers of the third Lord Bathurst. After a rumor reached me that documents concerning Miranda had been found in those papers, I made a trip to the mediaeval town of Cirencester in Gloucestershire. At once I identified the mysterious collection as the long-lost Miranda manuscripts. I found that these manuscripts, which were bound in sixty-three folio tomes, contained a veritable legion of diaries, letters, squibs, newspaper clippings, and intimate memoranda in their original form. I also became convinced that the discovery of these valuable memorabilia,—later purchased by the Venezuelan Government and deposited with the *Academia Nacional de la Historia* at Caracas,—would make imperative the rewriting of Miranda's life-story in a fashion that would occasionally be iconoclastic. The old passion, which had animated me in my salad days, flamed up again, and, forsaking for the time being other literary loves, I returned to my *primer amor*. The more material I found about the adventurous career of Miranda, the more did my interest

in the first South-American Dictator increase.

In 1924-1925, during a year of sabbatical leave from the University of Illinois, I resumed the task of collecting material for Miranda's biography. Again I made my way to the foot of the Cotswold hills and spent my days—and sometimes my nights—in delving deeply into the voluminous Miranda MSS. With new clues in my possession, I made a fresh search for illuminating sources in the Public Record Office, the manuscripts of the British Museum, the *Archives Nationales*, the *Archives du ministère des affaires étrangères*, and the *Archivo General de Indias*. I also sought for new light in the printed works in the British Museum, the *Bibliothèque Nationale* at Paris, and the *Biblioteca Nacional* of Madrid. During my visit to Venezuela in 1917 I had secured rare printed material regarding the revolutionary era of her history through my friend, the noted bibliographer, Señor Manuel Segundo Sánchez. Through the skillful aid of another friend, Señor Vicente Lecuna, the historian of Bolívar the Liberator, I have secured not only articles that have recently appeared in the public prints of Venezuela concerning Miranda, but also inedited data from the archives of the cathedral of Caracas and the archives of the Central University of Venezuela.

In composing a biography based largely upon inedited sources, I have made frequent use of quotations to verify, to illustrate, or to amplify the narrative. When the quoted documents were in English, I retained the original capitalization, orthography, and punctuation. Omissions that I have made from the documents quoted are marked by asterisks. Leaders (. . .) are employed to show the use by a quoted writer of a series of dots to indicate a greater pause than that marked by a period or perhaps to suggest a hiatus in the thought. Words which I added to quotations for the sake of clarity are inclosed in brackets.

My long-sustained quest has been facilitated by many persons. With rare generosity, in 1922 Lord Bathurst gave me

the key to his estate office in Cirencester where the papers of Miranda then reposed. Thus I was allowed to use the rich and varied Miranda memorabilia without any restrictions. Lord Bathurst later kindly copied for me certain Mirandian letters that turned up among some papers of Lord Melville that he had purchased. Dean Arthur H. Daniels of the Graduate School of the University of Illinois assigned funds for the purchase of books concerning Hispanic America for the University Library. I am thankful to the staff of that library, as well as to officials of the Widener Memorial Library, the Library of Congress, the British Museum, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, and the *Biblioteca Nacional* of Madrid for their helpful attention. The officials of the Bureau of Indexes and Archives of the United States Department of State, of the *Archives du ministère des affaires étrangères*, of the *Archives Nationales*, and of the *Archivo General de Indias* aided my investigations in various ways. Mr. Archer M. Huntington, president of the Hispanic Society of America, has kindly allowed me to use a map that had been prepared under my direction for *The Diary of Francisco de Miranda, 1783-1784*, which was recently published by that society. For assistance in collecting illustrations for this biography, I am particularly indebted to my colleague, Professor Frederick C. Dietz, to my friend M. Abel Doysié of Paris, France, to the Director of the National Archives of Venezuela, Dr. Vicente Dávila, and to Signor Diego Suárez Costa y Miranda, a lineal descendant of the martyred Miranda, whose home is in Florence, Italy.

For advice and encouragement in the last stages of my work I am grateful to Dr. J. F. Jameson of the Department of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress, to Dr. Max Farrand, Director of Research at the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, and A. E. Stamp, Esq., Deputy Keeper of the Public Record Office. Dr. Pelham H. Box, one-time Commonwealth Fund Fellow at the University of Illinois and now Assistant Lecturer in History at the University of

Bristol, carefully read and criticized the entire manuscript when it was in preliminary form. When it was nearly completed, it was further improved as a result of the constructive criticism of my friend, Professor Earl L. Bradsher of Louisiana State University. In its final form the *Life* has received from the publisher all the considerate attention that an author could desire.

URBANA, ILLINOIS

WILLIAM SPENCE ROBERTSON

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THE LIFE OF MIRANDA

Chapter I

ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE

FRANCISCO DE MIRANDA lived during an age of political transformations. The years that span his career include an era which for revolutionary changes is unique in world history. The Spanish-American Government that he helped to found thus epitomized his achievements: — “He took part in three great political movements of his age: the struggle for the independence of the United States, the French Revolution, and the emancipation of South America.” As Miranda dedicated his mature life to the liberation of America from Spanish rule, we shall begin by sketching conditions in Venezuela. Not only was this domain the environment of his early life, but it was also the object of his mature aspirations and the scene of his most dramatic activities.

At the time when our story begins, King Charles III of Spain held title to almost one-half of the territory in the New World. By a series of royal decrees that huge Empire had been carved into administrative divisions. The most important of these were the viceroyalties and the captaincies general. In 1750 the Captaincy General of Venezuela extended along the northern coast of South America from the Essequibo River to the Gulf of Maracaibo. This region was bounded on the west and south by the Viceroyalty of New Granada and by Dutch and Portuguese Guiana. It was administered by a captain general who managed the civil and military affairs of the Captaincy General and who also served as governor of the important province of Caracas. The inhabitants of Venezuela numbered about seven hundred thousand. Despite a prejudice against intermarriage there was considerable mingling of Indian, Negro, and white blood. The white people were grouped into two classes or castes: persons of Spanish lineage born in America who were styled creoles, and those persons who had been born in Old Spain. As peninsular Spaniards enjoyed a monopoly of important public offices, the creoles

viewed them with much jealousy.

Lying in a beautiful valley located a short distance from the southern shores of the Caribbean Sea was the city of Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. Besides being the seat of an archbishop, this city was also the capital of the province of Caracas and the metropolis of the Captaincy General. In 1750 this capital enjoyed a social distinction which was enhanced by the fact that it was a favorite residence of wealthy landowners. The city had been laid out according to the chessboard plan; its streets intersected at right angles. Facing the north-west corner of the main plaza or alameda rose the stately cathedral. A short distance west of the alameda and within the parish pertaining to the cathedral stood a handsome house. The master of this mansion was Sebastián de Miranda y Ravelo who, on April 24, 1749, had married Francisca Antonia Rodríguez Espinosa.¹ On March 28, 1750, she gave birth to a son. Eight days later this infant was baptised, as a certificate subscribed by Juan de Rada bears proof:

"In the cathedral of the city of Caracas, on April 5, 1750, I, the undersigned curate, have solemnly baptised, anointed, and blessed Sebastián Francisco, an infant that was born on March 28. This babe is a legitimate son of Don Sebastián de Miranda and Francisca Antonia Rodríguez. The child's godfather was Friar Tomás Baptista de Melo to whom there pertains its spiritual parenthood and obligation. In testimony whereof I sign this on the first-mentioned date." ²

As will be amply demonstrated in this biography, the child thus christened Sebastián Francisco was the Venezuelan who became famous in two hemispheres as Francisco de Miranda,—the knight-errant of Spanish-American liberty. During the

¹ A. C., libros de matrimonios de blancos, vol. 8.

² Miranda, *Diary of Francisco de Miranda*, p. xii. It was long believed that the subject of this biography was born on June 9, 1756. However, this was the birthday of his brother, Francisco Antonio Gabriel, whose baptismal certificate was printed by Austria, *Bosquejo de la historia militar de Venezuela*, I, 149, note. The curious mistake in dates was presumably in part due to the alteration in the order of his baptismal names made by "Francisco de Miranda" in 1772, see *infra*, p. 14.

decade following the birth of our hero there sprang from his parents three daughters: Ana Antonia, Rosa, and Micaela. It seems that a son was also born who was christened Javier. More important for our story is the indisputable fact that another son was born to the Mirandas on June 9, 1756, and was baptised twelve days later as Francisco Antonio Gabriel. The godfather of this child was a friend of the family named Francisco Antonio Arrieta.³

On their mother's side these children sprang from a family that had been domiciled in Caracas for several generations. Its origin and history are at present obscure. On the paternal branch the Mirandas descended from a Spaniard who had recently emigrated to South America from the Canary Islands.⁴ Sebastián de Miranda was a native of Orotava in the island of Tenerife. He was a descendant of one Francisco de Miranda who in the middle of the seventeenth century resided at Villa Nueva de la Serena in Spain. The ancestral home of the Mirandas was in the Kingdom of Oviedo.⁵

A Castilian antiquarian informs us that in the fourteenth century the chief seat of "the Mirandas of immemorial nobility" was at Soria in Old Castile. As illustrations of their valor, this writer tells us that Diego de Miranda perished in a campaign against the Catalonians, that Andrés de Miranda won renown in the Italian wars, and that Juan de Miranda was slain in his galley at the battle of Lepanto.⁶ In the words of an eighteenth-century chronicler, from the Miranda family there had sprung persons of "the greatest merit and loyalty to their King, men who had frequently distinguished themselves among their contemporaries. * * * The story of the different branches and members of this family would fill an extensive volume." That chronicler thus described the heraldic bearings of the Miranda family:

³ A. C., libros de bautizos de blancos, vol. 13.

⁴ Rojas, *Historia patria*, I, apéndice, pp. 175-76.

⁵ Zazo y Ortega, "Informe de hidalguía," Nov. 28, 1772, Mir. MSS., vol. 1.

⁶ Artigas, "Nobiliario de Soria," in *Boletín de la real academia de la historia*, LXXX, 515-16.

"Its coat of arms was composed of a shield that depicted upon a red ground the busts of five unclothed damsels. Each damsel bore a golden shell. This device was adopted by Melendo Analso de Miranda because he had liberated five maidens in a bloody conflict with Moslems who were carrying them as slaves to Córdoba. The shield was encircled by the original arms of the family,—two winged serpents whose tails touched their necks."⁷

At an unknown date a member of this adventurous family settled in the Canary Islands. In the town of Orotava one Gabriel de Miranda espoused María Francisca Ravelo. A fruit of this marriage was Sebastián de Miranda who at an early age emigrated to Venezuela and settled in the city of Caracas. There he became a merchant who dealt in linens. As he was not a creole, he could scarcely have stood high in the esteem of the colonial aristocracy.

Yet it appears that in 1749 by the side of prominent creoles Sebastián de Miranda supported the armed protest of those colonists who objected to the transactions of the Company of Guipúzcoa to which the Spanish Government had granted a monopoly of Venezuelan commerce.⁸ His affairs evidently prospered, for in 1762 he paid the heirs of Fernando Mejías five thousand pesos for the house that had been serving him as a residence.⁹ At the proposal of Colonel Castro, an inspector in the Spanish army, on December 17, 1764, Captain General Solano appointed Miranda captain of a new militia company that was to be composed of natives of the Canary Islands who were engaged in mercantile pursuits in Caracas. Captain Miranda had evidently served under the Spanish flag; for Solano described him as a person of "quality, valor, and military experience."¹⁰

Meantime the junior Sebastián was being educated. His

⁷ Zazo y Ortega, "Informe," *loc. cit.*, Mir. MSS., vol. 1. See further Piferer, *Nobiliario de los reinos y señorios de España*, II, 110-12.

⁸ Rojas, *op. cit.*, I, 254, 278.

⁹ Landaeta Rosales, "La casa donde nació en Caracas el generalísimo Francisco de Miranda," in *La Nación*, Oct. 28, 1910. ¹⁰ Rojas, *op. cit.*, I, 285.



House of Sebastián de Miranda in Caracas, Venezuela. From a recent photograph. Reproduced by courtesy of Señor Vicente Dávila.

parents doubtless taught him the rudiments of arts and letters. A Latin grammar was soon placed in his hands. He learned to recite the rosary and became acquainted with the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church. Strange though it may seem, not until he had passed his twentieth birthday did the lad receive the sacrament of confirmation in the metropolitan cathedral.¹¹ Meantime he had been sent to the Academy of Santa Rosa in his native city. Inedited records of this academy indicate that in January, 1762, Sebastián Francisco de Miranda was enrolled in one of its preparatory classes under Dr. Monteserrate.¹²

From this academy the creole boy passed to the cloisters of the Royal and Pontifical University of Caracas, an institution superimposed by royal decree upon the Academy of Santa Rosa. During the last half of the eighteenth century the chief subjects of study at that university were theology, law, Latin, music, rhetoric, and moral philosophy. The scanty records of the University of Caracas show that in September, 1764, two sons of Sebastián de Miranda, namely Sebastián Francisco and Francisco Antonio Gabriel, matriculated there and enrolled in a course in art under a teacher named Francisco Urbina. Those records further show that in July, 1766, those brothers were in another course under Urbina, but that by May, 1767, they had evidently discontinued their studies.¹³ In the halls of the Venezuelan university the Mirandas presumably became acquainted with the scions of such aristocratic families as de Rojas, de Ponte, Seijas, and Aristéguieta.

In a memoir which the subject of this biography later addressed to Charles III, he stated that he had received a classical education at "the Academy and Royal University of Santa Rosa." Among specific subjects of his study at the university he mentioned only philosophy and law.¹⁴ Though Miranda seems later to have declared that he received the

¹¹ *Boletín de la academia nacional de la historia*, XI, 22.

¹² A. U., libros de matrículas, vol. 2. ¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ April 10, 1785, A. G. S., estado, legajo 8141. Cf. Grisanti, *Miranda y la Emperatriz Catalina la Grande*, p. 79.

bachelor's degree at the University of Caracas in 1767, yet his name is absent from the published roll of its graduates.¹⁵ His appreciation for its teachings, however, is shown by a clause in his last testament that reads as follows: "To the University of Caracas there should be sent in my name the Greek classics in my library as a token of my gratitude and respect for the wise principles of literature and Christian morality with which it nourished my youth. These sound teachings have enabled me to overcome happily the grave risks and perils with which fate has encompassed me."¹⁶

Miranda once asserted that he also studied law at the University of Mexico.¹⁷ This assertion seems improbable, however, not only because it is inconsistent with statements found in his memorabilia but also because no evidence of his matriculation at that institution can be found in the Mexican archives. In any case, it is scarcely to be supposed that university training awoke in him a spirit of discontent with the existing régime. Shortly after Sebastián Francisco left the cloisters of the University of Caracas, however, events transpired that might well have provoked his dissatisfaction with colonial society.

On April 22, 1769, Captain General Solano granted Sebastián de Miranda an honorable release from his captaincy and stated that he had served the Spanish Government faithfully in different posts for twenty years. Solano's decision that Captain Miranda should retain the privileges of his rank displeased some noble militiamen who believed that such distinctions should be restricted to creoles. The shopkeeper soon provoked the ire of those colonists by wearing the uniform and baton of a militia captain. During the intrigues that followed aspersions were cast upon Miranda's lineage and social standing.

Dominated by members of the haughty creole aristocracy,

¹⁵ Stiles' MS., *Anales de la universidad central de Venezuela*, I, 669-70.

¹⁶ Robertson, "Miranda's Testamentary Dispositions," in *Hispanic American Historical Review*, VII, 291.

¹⁷ Stiles, *Literary Diary*, III, 130-31.

the *cabildo* or council of the capital city soon protested against his conduct and threatened to cast him into prison. However, on June 5, 1769, Solano declared that the retired officer was legitimately entitled to wear a captain's uniform and warned all persons to desist from molesting him. The ex-captain then presented to the Captain General a memorial concerning his ancestry and conduct. To paraphrase the ironic words ascribed to his advocate, what the memorialist desired to prove was neither the pure lineage nor the nobility of the people of Caracas but the nobility and pure lineage of his ancestors. In response the Captain General declared that in all the duties and exercises of his company Sebastián de Miranda had displayed much zeal and love for the royal service.¹⁸

This altercation was brought to the attention of the Spanish Government. Hence on September 12, 1770, Charles III addressed a decree to the *cabildo* of Caracas in which he grouped natives of the Canaries with citizens of Spain. The King declared that Peninsular Spaniards domiciled in Caracas were as much entitled to hold public offices as creoles; that the right to make military appointments pertained not to the *cabildo* of Caracas but to the Captain General; and that it had no authority to direct that a judge should try Miranda for wearing a military uniform. The King also announced that he had conceded to "Don Sebastián de Miranda the retirement that he voluntarily solicited with the enjoyment of all the distinctions, exemptions, privileges, and military prerogatives of his rank as well as the permission to carry a baton and to wear the uniform of a retired captain of the new battalion of militia of this province. As there is no cause for complaint concerning him," continued the King, "I command that perpetual silence shall be observed with respect to the inquiry concerning his quality and origin. Further, I threaten with dismissal and other severe penalties any soldier or any member of the *cabildo* of Caracas who censures Miranda either by voice or pen or who does not treat him in the same

¹⁸ Rojas, *op. cit.*, pp. 292-96.

respectful manner as that which he was formerly accorded.”¹⁹

Petty though this dispute was in its origins, yet it illustrates the domineering attitude of the council of Caracas toward persons who were not members of the creole aristocracy. It demonstrates that Sebastián's first-born son witnessed the bitter effects of jealousy and bickering between creoles and Spaniards. Further, it signifies that at an early age his eyes were inevitably directed toward the King's house.

Scarcely had Sebastián Francisco attained the stature of a man when he decided to enter the service of Spain. On January 3, 1771, he addressed a request to Captain General Solano. This petition is the first available bit of composition signed by the man who was destined to become a framer of constitutions for Spanish America. The plea ran in these words:

“Don Sebastián Francisco de Miranda, a native of this city and a legitimate son of the militia captain, Don Sebastián de Miranda and Doña Francisca Antonia Rodríguez Espinosa, as has been legally shown before you, appears and declares:—‘That I wish to serve His Majesty in the kingdoms of Spain according to my inclination and talents. Hence I have made clear in writing the pure blood of my ancestors and the nature of my conduct. I beseech that you consider the information which I present and that you direct that the witnesses whom I produce should attest that they know that I am the legitimate son of the lawful wedlock of Don Sebastián de Miranda and Doña Francisca Antonia Rodríguez Espinosa, born and considered as such. I also desire that they testify that I have been instructed by my parents in the rudiments of arts and letters. I further request that they swear that I have lived in a Christian manner and have partaken of the sacraments of our Holy Mother Church. Lastly, I ask that, if it be your pleasure, you shall direct that the original of this petition with the accompanying testimonials should be returned to me.’ ”²⁰

¹⁹ Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

²⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 1.

With this petition Miranda submitted papers that attested the purity of his family's lineage, demonstrated his father's valuable services, and illustrated his own humble career. Among these documents were the sworn testimonies of five respectable citizens of Caracas which reënforced the statements made in his petition. In addition, these deponents said that the young creole had been a diligent and zealous student in the University of Caracas where he had shown signs of genius. The youth asked that there might also be adjoined to his plea the royal order of September 12, 1770, concerning his father's lineage and service.²¹

At the same time Miranda presented a memorial to the vicar of the bishopric of Caracas. In that document he explained his desire immediately to leave South America. The occasion was the arrival at La Guaira of vessels transporting Spanish soldiers to Venezuela. In one of these frigates the young man proposed soon to voyage to Spain. He represented himself as being neither married nor betrothed and as free of any impediment that might prevent him from leaving his native province. He further avowed that he had lived under the eyes of his parents with due respect and that in regard to political affairs his conduct had left nothing to be desired. This plea was accompanied by the testimony of two rectors of the cathedral of Caracas who declared that Sebastián Francisco de Miranda was a communicant of their church and a bachelor who was not engaged to be married. They avowed that he was a youth who had never been reprehended for any misconduct. They further declared that he had always lived under the authority of his parents pursuing a regular life, without having given the slightest cause for complaint about his behavior.²² Two fiscal officers of the colony named Manuel de Salas and Juan Vicente de Bolívar also made statements about the youth's conduct: the father of Bolívar the Liberator signed a

²¹ Certificates of A. J. Muños, D. Velásquez, B. López Méndez, J. de la Sierra, and J. Montero Bolero, Jan., 1771, *ibid.*

²² J. Blas Herns and B. A. de Vargas, Jan. 5, 1771, *ibid.*

certificate which declared "that Don Sebastián Francisco de Miranda, a resident of this city" is in no way indebted to the royal treasury. The two officials further testified "that in all matters of the royal service in which it has been his duty to assist, he has coöperated with zeal and propriety."²³

The license that, in accordance with the policy of the Spanish Government, the young creole had to secure before he might leave America for the land of his forebears was readily obtained. Among Miranda's manuscripts there is preserved an account of his voyage from La Guaira to Cadiz in a Swedish frigate named the *Prince Frederick*. The first entry in this diary reads as follows: "January 25 to 26, 1771. At twelve o'clock we made sail accompanied by a Swedish packet boat." The Venezuelan noted in his journal that on the frigate there were only a few other passengers: a surgeon, a Biscayan chaplain with his small son, and an engineer in the Spanish army. According to this account, the *Prince Frederick* reached Puerto Rico on January 30.²⁴ The voyagers caught a glimpse of the Spanish coast near Cape St. Vincent on February 28. Early that afternoon Miranda saw many land birds hovering around the ship. At eleven o'clock on the morning of March 1, 1771, the frigate cast anchor in the harbor of Cadiz. Soon afterwards Miranda set foot in Spain.

The ambitious creole had left his native land for the purpose of entering the royal service. It was Sebastián de Miranda's prosperous condition that enabled his eldest son to voyage to Cadiz with the intention of securing a commission under the Spanish flag. So far as can be discerned from contemporary evidence, at this juncture the youth was loyal to the government which his father had served with so much fidelity. Yet in 1795 the French artist Quatremère de Quincy, who had become intimately acquainted with the Venezuelan while they were incarcerated in a Parisian dungeon, avowed that even before he left his homeland a love of liberty was shining in Miranda's soul.

²³ January 4, 1771, Mir. MSS., vol. 1.

²⁴ "Fragmentos de un Diario * * *," *ibid.*

Chapter II

FOLLOWING THE SPANISH FLAG

SEBASTIÁN FRANCISCO DE MIRANDA soon found a Spanish hostelry. Letters from his relatives introduced him to a Spaniard named José de Aniño. That hospitable merchant invited Miranda to his home. The inquisitive youth from South America beheld with interest the sights of a great seaport of Spain: its bustling harbor, its castellated forts, and antique palaces. Señor Aniño had been instructed by a correspondent in Caracas to advance funds to the Venezuelan. Miranda's memoranda contain an entry stating that after he reached Cadiz this merchant furnished him with two thousand pesos which were mainly used to purchase a new wardrobe.

With the spirit of a merchant Sebastián de Miranda had calculated that his son could be more advantageously fitted out in Spain than in Venezuela. Either the young creole was anxious to equip himself well for his contemplated visit to Madrid or else contact with Spanish culture had stimulated a taste for elegant attire. Various articles which he purchased in Cadiz indicate that he spent his father's money in lavish fashion. Among the expenditures for wearing apparel were the following items: four yards of blue cloth for a cloak, 288 pesos; gold braid, 215 pesos; a pair of silk stockings, 64 pesos; a silk handkerchief, 27 pesos; 2 black hats, 108 pesos; a silk umbrella, 88 pesos; 4 pair of shoes, 88 pesos; and a hair net, 10 pesos.¹ Early in March, 1771, the young dandy, who had patronized many shopkeepers of Cadiz, left that city in a coach bound for Madrid.

While on his journey to that city the curious creole stopped at Jerez where he visited an old monastery of the Carthusian order. After viewing from his coach windows the stubble fields of Andalusia, he reached Córdoba. There he admired the chapel that Spanish vandals had erected amidst majestic col-

¹ "Livro Gral. de Cuentas," Mir. MSS., vol. 1.

umns of the mediaeval mosque. "The high altar," he wrote in his diary, "is a magnificent work." From Córdoba the traveler ascended by way of Andújar to the Sierra Morena. While traversing these snow-clad mountains his carriage broke down, and he was forced to take refuge in a hermitage. After the vehicle was repaired, he proceeded through bare, undulating vineyards to Valdepeñas where he did not fail to sample its famous wine. Past whirling windmills and through clouds of dust his coach rolled over the baked and rocky tableland of La Mancha. On the night of March 27 he secured lodgings in the Spanish capital.²

Miranda was still dependent on his father's bounty. After reaching Madrid he received from Aníño one hundred and fifteen pesos, the net proceeds from a consignment of Venezuelan cacao that had been sold on his account in Spain. From this sum the creole paid the expenses of his journey from Cadiz. He soon incurred other expenditures because of trips from Madrid to certain historic towns.³

Accompanied by a teacher of French, in August, 1771, Miranda made a trip to view the royal residence at San Ildefonso. In a memorandum he expressed his admiration for its "magnificent gardens, fountains, and statues, especially the fountain of Diana." The palace with its infinite number of statues, both ancient and modern, he described as "very magnificent." From San Ildefonso the tourist and his tutor went to the antique city of Segovia. There they visited the Gothic cathedral with its beautiful cloisters as well as the famous alcázar where an academy of artillery had been installed. The observant South American then journeyed to the Escorial, that fortress, church, and palace which he appropriately described as a most magnificent structure. Within its forbidding walls he noticed some sacred relics, beheld the immense store of royal treasure, and admired the canvasses of Raphael, Titian, and Michelangelo; he visited the library adorned by portraits

² Ruta del Puerto de Santa María á Madrid," Mir. MSS., vol. 1.

³ "Livro Gral. de Cuentas," *ibid.*

of wise men, the royal apartments embellished by wonderful furnishings, and the hall of battles decorated by mural paintings depicting Spanish military exploits.⁴

Not only did Miranda gloat over Spanish castles and palaces but he devoted some time to serious study. Soon after his arrival at Madrid he secured a tutor in French. Under another teacher he took a course in mathematics. Among the scientific apparatus that he bought in the capital city he mentioned an atlas, a globe, and an armillary sphere.

At this juncture Miranda also began to collect books. In a long list of volumes purchased in Madrid were the following items: a history of Spain; treatises on mathematics and geography; the works of Pope, Young, and Vergil; a work in four volumes concerning English revolutions; two volumes dealing with Russian revolutions; an English grammar; an Italian grammar; Spanish-English, French-English, and French-Spanish dictionaries; and treatises concerning the military art. At some time during his sojourn in the Iberian Peninsula the creole evidently secured literary advice from an Englishman. A schedule of prospective purchases prepared for Miranda includes Hume's essays, Robertson's Charles V, the works of Lord Bolingbroke, and a treatise of John Locke on government. Among the French books that he had decided to purchase was Abbé Raynal's history of the Indies. In another undated list is named the polemical work by Las Casas that denounced the enslavement of the American aborigines. As his purchases included cedar cases for his books and globes, it is evident that Miranda had begun to treat his belongings with loving care.⁵

After spending more than a year in this pleasant fashion, Sebastián Francisco de Miranda took steps to carry out the purpose of his voyage. At Madrid on November 9, 1772, a scribe named Manuel Toledo, who affirmed that he was a secre-

⁴ "Fragmentos del viage desde Madrid al Rl. Sitio de la Granja," *ibid.*

⁵ "Nota de los Livros que he comprado en Madrid"; "English Books"; "Notte des beaux Livres," *ibid.*

tary of the King, affixed his signature to a paper which attested that there had appeared before him one Francisco Sebastián de Miranda, a resident of Madrid who was a native of Caracas. This document stated that the Venezuelan was a "legitimate son of the lawful marriage" of Captain Sebastián de Miranda and Francisca Antonia Rodríguez Espinosa and "that said Francisco Sebastián had been a student at the Royal Seminary of the city of Caracas." This instructive certificate, which was evidently prepared in support of Miranda's application for a commission in the Spanish army, proves that in November, 1772, perhaps because his brother, Francisco Antonio, had died, the Venezuelan had formally reversed the order of his Christian names.⁶

What appears even more strange is that in no available document of a later date emanating from him did he use the baptismal name of his father, even as a secondary appellation. Henceforth Francisco Sebastián de Miranda omitted Sebastián from his signature:—he invariably styled himself Francisco de Miranda. An odd interchange of Christian names thus helps to explain why the certificate of baptism of his brother Francisco Antonio Gabriel was long considered to be the baptismal certificate of the precursor of Spanish-American independence. This epoch in his career was thus described in a memorial that the elder brother later sent to Charles III:

"I proceeded to Europe with the design of serving Your Majesty in the army. For this purpose I fixed my residence in Madrid and applied myself with much ardor to the study of mathematics, especially to those branches that most closely pertained to the military art, and to the living languages of Europe. I brought from foreign countries the teachers and books that were best suited for my purpose. In this educative process I spent a considerable portion of my patrimony, but I procured sufficient knowledge to warrant whatever expense it caused me. I am sure that this instruction formed the basis

⁶ Mir. MSS., vol. 1.

of a sound training and lasting interest.”⁷

The desire of his son to secure a commission in the Spanish army induced Sebastián de Miranda to request a court chronicler named Ramón Zazo y Ortega to prepare from documents in the royal archives a certificate concerning the lineage and services of the Mirandas. The result was an *informe de hidalguía*. This document was an illuminated tract that recounted the achievements of Sebastián's family, authoritatively described its historic coat of arms, and even mentioned the helmets of burnished steel that were occasionally worn by its valiant sons.⁸ Thus reënforced, the effort of Francisco de Miranda was not fruitless. On December 7, 1772, he entered the Spanish service as captain in a battalion of the infantry regiment of the Princess.⁹ This commission was undoubtedly purchased by his father's silver. Thirteen years later Miranda stated that the price of his captaincy was eight thousand pesos.

When he was assigned to a company of the Princess Regiment its members were distributed among those presidios of northern Africa that were on the fringe of the far-flung empire of Charles III. Either service in frontier garrisons did not please Captain Miranda or else he was anxious for advancement. When he became aware that some officers might be selected from his regiment for service in the Spanish Indies, at Melilla, on June 15, 1774, Miranda addressed a petition to Count O'Reilly, inspector general of the Spanish army, to state that, as he had promoted his education in military science, geometry, geography, English, French, Italian, and Latin, he wished to be considered as a candidate for a post which would enable him to display his zeal and energy.¹⁰

Visions of a transfer to Spanish America, however, were soon dispelled by threatening danger. On October 23, 1774, in response to an ominous warning that the Algerians and

⁷ Miranda to Charles III, April 10, 1785, A. G. S., estado, 8141; Grisanti, *Miranda y la Emperatriz Catalina la Grande*, pp. 79-80.

⁸ Nov. 28, 1772, Mir. Mss., vol. 1.

⁹ Hoja de servicio, Dec., 1774, A. G. S., guerra, 2638. ¹⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 1.

Moroccans would not suffer any Christian establishments on the southern coast of the Mediterranean between Orán and Ceuta, the King of Spain declared war on the African Moslems. The prime object of the ensuing Moslem campaign was to drive the Spaniards from their fortified towns in northern Africa. During a heroic defense of the fortress of Melilla against a siege directed by the Moroccan Emperor that lasted from December 9, 1774, to March 16, 1775, Captain Miranda served as a volunteer.¹¹ According to his own story, which at this point there seems no good reason to doubt, on January 20, 1775, Miranda presented to General Juan Sharlock, the commander of Melilla, a daring plan for a sally from its fortress.¹² After the African war had terminated in the discomfiture of the Moors, the young officer felt that he was entitled to special recognition. On June 20, 1775, he addressed a memorial to Charles III urging that because of his services in the Moroccan campaign he should be rewarded with the insignia of a military order. He even suggested that he should be decorated with the red Cross of the Order of Santiago.¹³

Among his papers there is also found a petition that on June 20, 1775, he addressed to General Sharlock. On behalf of those soldiers who had participated in the defense of Melilla he requested that a corps should be selected from their number to join a projected Algerian expedition. So far as Miranda is concerned, this request was conceded; for he wrote a memoir describing the expedition under Count O'Reilly that early in July, 1775, made a misguided attack on Algiers. He asserted that during the ensuing *mêlée*, when many Spanish soldiers were slaughtered on Algerian sands, his musket was shattered by a Moorish ball, and that, although three bullets struck him on the legs, yet he escaped miraculously without injury.¹⁴ But the ambitious captain was disgusted with the treatment accorded him by Spanish officials. In a petition to

¹¹ Hoja de servicio, Dec., 1776, A. G. S., guerra, legajo 2638.

¹² Miranda to Charles III, April 10, 1785, and note B, no. 1, *ibid.*, estado, 8141.

¹³ Mir. MSS., vol. 2.

¹⁴ "Alicante, 14 de Julio de 1775," *ibid.*

Charles III he later declared that "the prizes with which the piety of Your Majesty destined to reward the merit and valor of the garrison of Melilla were bestowed upon various persons who in no manner deserved them,—thus not only depriving worthy warriors of their meed but giving them a rebuff!"¹⁵

In the end of 1775 he made a journey to the much-coveted Gibraltar, which Spain had left in the hands of England by the Treaty of Utrecht. The object of this trip he later explained as being to view the fortress, the garrison, and the Hanoverian mercenaries who came to relieve a contingent of English soldiers.¹⁶ During his visit Captain Miranda became well known to officers of the Gibraltar garrison. On January 3, 1776, Commandant Boyd even invited him to attend a ball at the Governor's House.¹⁷ Allusions which Miranda later made to this charming glimpse of English culture lead us to imagine that it left a vivid and enduring impression upon his mind.

This experience did not render him more contented with his post. He subsequently dreamed of being transferred to the Spanish naval service, of securing a commission in the Spanish militia, and of making a visit to Prussia to examine her military system. In an autobiographical sketch Miranda later expressed the opinion that the Inspector General refused to allow him to visit Prussia because he had dared privately to express disapproval of that officer's management of the Algerian expedition.

In the autumn of 1776, when the second battalion of his regiment was selected to join the expedition of Pedro de Cevallos to South America, Captain Miranda again vainly aspired to change the scene of his activities. Even when he cast aside his beloved books and plunged into the dissipations that Cadiz afforded, he apparently did not escape annoyance.¹⁸ It seems not without significance that in the official re-

¹⁵ Grisanti, p. 80. ¹⁶ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 42.

¹⁷ Jan. 3, 1776, Mir. MSS., vol. 2.

¹⁸ Miranda to Cevallos (copy), Aug. 18, 1776, *ibid*; Miranda to Charles III, April 10, 1785, and notes C and D, A. G. S., estado, 8141.

port of his regiment prepared in December, 1776, the statement was made that Miranda possessed proved valor, great application, and undoubted capacity, but that he ought to display more prudence.

In the spring of 1777 Captain Miranda became acquainted with an Englishman named John Turnbull who was visiting Cadiz with some friends. On June 7 Turnbull sent a letter from Gibraltar to Miranda in which he thanked the captain for his friendly attentions and promised to send him some books and sheet music. "We are all exceedingly sensible of your Civilities and Politeness," said the Englishman, "and it would make me, in particular, very happy, to have the opportunity of rendering you any Services, that were useful or agreeable."¹⁹ Though he knew it not, through a gift for making friends, Miranda had won the attachment of an influential business man who became deeply interested in his career.

From 1777 to 1780 Miranda's fortunes fluctuated. In July, 1777, he was imprisoned in a castle at Cadiz because of disobedience. Still, in a report of his company drawn up in the following November he was highly praised. Instead of criticizing him for lack of prudence, the inspector declared, "this captain performs his duties well."²⁰ Yet during the next year, he was placed under arrest and accused of insubordination. Subsequently, however, he was exonerated of this charge.²¹ In the autumn of 1778, on the occasion of the return of the Portuguese Queen Dowager from Madrid to Lisbon, a company of fusileers belonging to the Princess Regiment, which was directed to act as her escort during a sojourn at Jaraicejo, was placed under the command of Miranda, who was instructed to see that she was accorded the same honors as the Queen of Spain. In November, 1778, after visiting a famous sanctuary at Guadeloupe, by way of Córdoba, Andújar, Valdepeñas, and Toledo, Captain Miranda led his men to Madrid.²²

¹⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 2. ²⁰ A. G. S., guerra, 2638.

²¹ Farsis to Miranda, Nov. 11, 1778, Mir. MSS., vol. 2.

²² Roca to Miranda, Oct. 22, 1778; "Jornal desde Toledo á Jaraizo," *ibid.*

Soon afterwards an estimable officer named Juan Manuel de Cagigal became colonel of the Princess Regiment. Cagigal, who had entered the royal service about 1750 as cadet in an infantry regiment, had fought in a campaign in Portugal, commanded a regiment in Algiers, and served as a brigadier in South America. Between the genial colonel and the aspiring captain an intimate friendship sprang up which was not without influence upon Miranda's fortunes.

For the time being, however, this attachment was transient, for Cagigal was soon succeeded by Colonel Juan Roca. In sharp contrast with his predecessor, this officer became so dissatisfied with Miranda's conduct that he placed him under arrest. In December, 1779, Colonel Roca drew up a formal complaint against the Venezuelan. Roca's arraignment contained the following charges: that Miranda had purchased provisions in a manner contrary to military regulations; that he had neglected to give a soldier funds which were due him; that clothing belonging to Miranda's men had been stolen; that members of his company had been unjustifiably imprisoned; that he had palliated the conduct of a merchant who had mistreated his soldiers; that he had failed to pay promptly the just bill of a Madrid merchant; that he had taken no steps to apprehend a thief who he alleged had filched money from the company's treasury; and that, during an acrimonious controversy, he had drawn his sword against a soldier and inflicted serious wounds.²³

Miranda ascribed these grave accusations to Roca's jealous disposition. As a result of the unedifying controversy the Spanish Government soon directed that the accused captain should exchange his post for an appointment of the same rank in a battalion of the Princess Regiment that was stationed at Cadiz. On March 20, 1780, Miranda's accounts were approved by ranking officers; and he relinquished the regimental properties that had been intrusted to him. Shortly afterwards

²³ "Cargos que hace el Brigadier Dn. Juan Roca," *ibid.*

he left the capital for the seacoast.²⁴ For the time being, at least, he had triumphed over his harsh critics.

Meantime his artistic and literary interests had developed. A list dated March 6, 1780, shows how he had increased his library. Among his acquisitions were music books and sheet music, which included music for the flute. A Greek grammar as well as English, French, German, and Latin dictionaries were now included in his collection, besides certain works of Corneille, Molière, Pope, Raynal, Sallust, and Vergil. Significant additions that indicated a trend toward the study of politics were various books about the *Encyclopédie*, Puffendorf's treatise on natural law, the works of Helvetius and Montesquieu, and a French translation of *De jure belli et pacis* by Grotius. By items designated as *Oeuvres de R * * * au* and *Oeuvres de V * * ** Miranda presumably sought to disguise his purchase of French philosophic writings that were prohibited from circulating in the Spanish dominions.²⁵ Still, he was denounced because he owned prohibited books and indecent pictures. It is possible that, as he later alleged, familiars of the Holy Office actually cast some of his beloved tomes into the flames.²⁶

The Treaty of Alliance that France had signed with the United States in February, 1778, eventually afforded Miranda an opportunity to return to the New World. As Spain was bound to France by the Bourbon Family Compact of 1761, which provided that whatever nation attacked either contracting party also attacked the other and that when one party was at war either offensively or defensively it could call upon the other for military and naval aid, France undertook to obtain assistance from Spain in her war with England. In April, 1779, Montmorin, the French ambassador at Madrid, negotiated a secret treaty with Count Floridablanca, the

²⁴ Report of Marquis Someruelos and others, Mar. 20, 1780, Mir. MSS., vol. 2; Roca to Miranda, Mar. 21, 1780, *ibid.*

²⁵ "Equipage de España," *ibid.*, vol. 4.

²⁶ Medina, *Historia del tribunal del santo oficio de la inquisición de Cartagena de las Indias*, pp. 361-62; *Edinburgh Review*, XIII, 286.



Juan Manuel de Cagigal. Portrait in the Miranda Manuscripts. With an inscription in Miranda's handwriting. In the Academia Nacional de la Historia, Caracas.

Spanish secretary of state, that drew the ally of France into the American Revolution. To the intense horror of some publicists of Spain her soldiers consequently aided the revolutionists of the Thirteen Colonies.

Upon his arrival at Cadiz from Madrid, said Miranda, the Inspector General of the Spanish army privately accused him of attempting "to subvert the laws of the Kingdom" by his importunities, and intimated that, if he desired, he might proceed to the Indies in a fleet which was anchored in the harbor. Convinced that he would never obtain satisfaction in his controversy with Colonel Roca, the dissatisfied officer resolved "to make a virtue of necessity." Hence he joined the expedition as "a supernumerary of the Aragon regiment."²⁷

Francisco de Miranda sailed from Cadiz for America in April, 1780, in the forces commanded by Marshal Victoriano de Navia. The Spanish fleet, composed of ships of the line and transports conveying some ten thousand troops, evaded the English frigates under Admiral Rodney that sought to intercept them. Under the protection of a squadron commanded by De Guichen, who had succeeded D'Estaing as admiral of the French fleet in American waters, the Spanish forces reached Martinique. On June 29, 1780, Miranda was made a captain in the regiment of Aragon.²⁸ His delight must have increased when he was appointed aide to his former chief, Cagigal, who was attached to the expedition in the capacity of general.

Detachments of Navia's soldiers were used to reënforce Spanish garrisons in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Spaniards and their French allies soon made preparations for an attack upon certain English colonies. Early in April, 1781, in the company of General Cagigal, who was acting as governor of Cuba, Miranda left Habana with an expedition that was designed to reënforce Bernardo de Gálvez, governor of Louisiana, who, after capturing English posts at Baton Rouge, Natchez, and Mobile, had boldly invested Pensacola, Florida.

²⁷ Grisanti, pp. 81-82.

²⁸ Hoja de servicio, Oct. 25, 1783, A. G. S., guerra, 2513.

The soldiers who beleaguered Pensacola were apparently composed of seven thousand Spaniards, seven hundred Frenchmen, and some American patriots. On May 8 the garrison, which was commanded by General Campbell, hoisted the white flag, and articles of capitulation were signed. On May 10 the allies occupied the post.

Whether or not he commanded the American volunteers in this operation, as has been alleged, Miranda entered the city with the victors.²⁹ On May 12 he bought some volumes of English literature from a Pensacola bookseller. Soon afterwards he purchased for use as slaves three Negroes and one Negro boy.³⁰ Further, on June 21, 1781, Captain William Johnstone of the Royal Artillery, who was a prisoner at Habana, acknowledged that he had "given to Captain Miranda one Negro Man named Brown as a free gift in consideration of the Valuable and High Esteem" he had for that gentleman.³¹ Obviously Miranda was interested in the slave trade.

As a reward for meritorious conduct in the Pensacola campaign, on July 20, 1781, Governor Cagigal brevetted him lieutenant colonel. Possibly because of the favor that the creole had found in Cagigal's eyes, certain Spanish officials now viewed him with jealousy. The first incident that gave this spirit a chance to manifest itself was a visit to Cuba by General Campbell on his voyage from Pensacola to New York. Soon afterwards a complaint was lodged with the Spanish Government that Colonel Miranda, "a passionate enthusiast of the English," had guiltily connived at the inspection of the defenses of Habana by that general.³² When Miranda became aware of this accusation he secured convincing evidence that he was actually absent from that city when Campbell paid his visit, and that a private named Montesinos had escorted the English general to the fortifications.³³ On the other side, it

²⁹ Junius, *A Jean Skei Eustace*, p. 6.

³⁰ Receipt of J. Falconer and Co., May 12, 1781, Mir. MSS., vol. 3; receipt of D. Holley, May 15, 1781, and of T. Kelly, June 1, 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 4; and of W. Quinby, May 18, 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 21.

³¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 4.

³² José de Gálvez to Cagigal, Nov. 2, 1781 (copy), *ibid.*

³³ Miranda to Marqués del Rl. Socorro, Feb. 11, 1783, *ibid.*

was later asserted that Miranda used his influence in Cuba to secure for the French admiral, Count de Grasse, the funds that aided him to take his fleet to Chesapeake Bay,—a maneuver which enabled that commander to play an important part in the operations that culminated in the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown.³⁴

On August 9, 1781, Governor Cagigal intrusted Colonel Miranda with a mission to Jamaica. The colonel was authorized to arrange a cartel for the exchange of prisoners between the English and the Spanish. The last clause of the governor's secret instructions to his aide-de-camp ran as follows: "From your zeal and activity I anticipate all the advantages that would naturally be expected from this commission, as well as from those other matters which I intrust to your penetration and discretion."³⁵ It would thus seem that the aide was intrusted with a task which was too delicate to permit elucidation even in his secret instructions. About two months later José de Gálvez, minister of the Indies, sent a letter to Cagigal stating that although he approved of the proposed exchange of prisoners yet he desired him immediately to appoint another commissioner to take Miranda's place.³⁶

Meantime that officer had reached Kingston. On September 28 Governor Dalling asked him to dinner but Miranda declined because of other engagements. This response aroused the ire of Dalling who felt that his invitation should receive first consideration and who consequently directed him to change his abode to that part of the city which was called Spanish Town until he could be dispatched to Cuba.³⁷ Despite this incident the Spanish commissioner soon gained the governor's favor. In response to Dalling's request, on November 6 Miranda sent him a detailed account of certain fleets which the Spaniards had equipped to attack Pensacola.³⁸ Perhaps the clever commissioner sought thus to ingratiate himself with

³⁴ Junius, *A Jean Skei Eustace*, p. 6.

³⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 3.

³⁶ Nov. 16, 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 4.

³⁷ Dalling to Miranda, Sept. 28, 1781, *ibid.*, vol. 21.

³⁸ Dalling to Germain, Oct. 10 to Nov. 15, 1781, C. O., 137/82.

the English.

On November 18, 1781, a cartel was signed by Miranda as the agent for Governor Cagigal, and on the other hand, by Governor Dalling and Admiral Parker. This cartel arranged that Spanish soldiers and sailors who were held as prisoners of war by the English should be exchanged for Englishmen of equal rank who were detained by the Spaniards. A special stipulation provided that crews captured on English or Spanish vessels which had not been regularly commissioned by their respective governments should be treated as pirates.³⁹ When Miranda sailed for Cuba he transported over one hundred Spaniards who had been held by the English as prisoners of war.⁴⁰ He also took with him data that he had secretly gathered concerning the personnel of the militia and veteran soldiers at Jamaica.⁴¹ This information was doubtless intended to aid the Spaniards who were projecting an attack on that island.

Upon his arrival with two vessels at Batabanó, Cuba, Colonel Miranda wrote to Governor Cagigal concerning his mission. In his letter the colonel declared that he had brought "exact information of the enemies' ships at Jamaica and of the squadrons expected from Europe, statistics of the number of veteran soldiers and militia, topographical plans of the island which are approximately accurate and which may be perfected by the data that I bring with me, and three small swift vessels that will make excellent dispatch boats or corsairs. In addition, there are various other matters and profitable negotiations that I cannot trust to writing of which I shall inform Your Excellency when we meet." It is clear that Miranda had been spying upon an island that the Spaniards wished to conquer from England. He declared that he had been aided in the execution of his secret designs by an English

³⁹ *Cartel entre las yslas de Cuba y Jamaica.*

⁴⁰ Miranda to Cagigal, Dec. 13, 1781, A. G. I., audiencia de Santo Domingo, estante 84, cajón 2, legajo 9.

⁴¹ "Estado del exercito de Jamaica conforme se hallaba el 28 de Noviembre de 1781," Mir. MSS., vol. 25.

shopkeeper named Philip Allwood. To reward this merchant, who had served as agent for one Eliphalet Fitch, the Spanish commissioner had undertaken to allow him covertly to transport to Habana among government packages a quantity of English linen.⁴²

On March 11, 1782, Cagigal was informed by a royal order that he was relieved of his duties as governor of Cuba so that he might serve in the army of operations under the command of Bernardo de Gálvez.⁴³ Hence he soon played a part in the attack of the combined French and Spanish forces upon the English garrison in the Bahama Islands. On May 6, 1782, a fleet from Habana commanded by Cagigal, with the aid of vessels manned by insurgents from South Carolina, attacked New Providence, the capital of the Bahamas. In this expedition, which was composed of some two thousand men, Colonel Miranda was enrolled as one of Cagigal's aides. To confront the besiegers the English commander, Colonel Maxwell, had a small, invalid force. After a brief siege General Cagigal summoned the garrison to surrender.⁴⁴ To arrange the capitulation he sent Miranda to New Providence with the tender *Surprise* that belonged to an American warship.⁴⁵

On May 8 Cagigal and Maxwell signed a capitulation by which the Bahamas were surrendered to Spain. Whereupon differences arose between Cagigal and Commodore Gillon of the South Carolina navy in regard to the treatment of vessels of war belonging to the American patriots. In reply to an unfavorable judgment of the American Commodore about Colonel Miranda, Cagigal declared that this merely strengthened his opinion of "the distinguished merit of that officer who, like myself, has the misfortune not to think as you do."⁴⁶ The discomfited Gillon later alleged that because of Miranda's "misrepresentations" General Cagigal had declined to sign a contract providing that he should pay South Carolina sixty

⁴² Dec. 13, 1781, A. G. I., audiencia de Santo Domingo, 84-2-9.

⁴³ *Ibid.* ⁴⁴ Maxwell to Germain, May 6 and 14, 1782, C. O., 23/25.

⁴⁵ Sparks, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, VI, 353, 355.

⁴⁶ May 13, 1782, Mir. MSS., vol. 4.

thousand pesos for the use of her frigate.⁴⁷

Storm clouds had meantime been gathering around the heads of Cagigal and his favorite aide. Reports of the intendant of Habana had evidently convinced the Spanish Government that a check should be placed on Miranda's activity. As early as November, 1781, a royal order had been sent to Habana that the creole captain should be imprisoned.⁴⁸ On March 18, 1782, instructions were framed directing a magistrate named Juan de Vrunuela to investigate the complaint that Miranda had been involved with Allwood in illicit trade. As Cagigal had apparently connived at the prohibited traffic, his official conduct was also to be scrutinized. The aide was censured because in the Kingston cartel, contrary to Spanish policy, he had agreed to the stipulation that the crews of certain captured vessels should be treated as pirates.⁴⁹

Meantime Colonel Miranda had been sent to General Bernardo de Gálvez at Guarico with the glorious news of the capture of the Bahamas. That general now informed his government that Miranda was exerting an evil influence with the soldiers and was stimulating jealousy among the military commanders.⁵⁰ By order of Gálvez, and in accordance with a royal decree, in August, 1782, the discredited colonel was summarily arrested and sent to Habana. As General Cagigal had returned to that city and was willing to vouch for his good conduct to the Spanish court, Miranda was soon set at liberty.⁵¹ Yet after the arrival of Luis de Unzaga, who had been appointed governor of Cuba, the efforts of Vrunuela to thrust the suspect into a dungeon seemed destined to succeed. At this crisis in Miranda's fortunes a rumor reached the West Indies that negotiations for peace were being carried on between England and her revolted colonies.

On December 23, 1783, Vrunuela announced the result of

⁴⁷ Sparks, VI, 332-34.

⁴⁸ José de Gálvez to Cagigal, Mar. 11, 1782, A. G. I., audiencia de Santo Domingo, 84-2-9. ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Bernardo de Gálvez to José de Gálvez, Nov. 30, 1782, *ibid.*

⁵¹ "Memoria sucinta," June 30, 1783, Sp. MSS., vol. 101.

his investigations. Allwood was condemned to pay a fine and to be imprisoned for eight years in the castle of San Juan de Ulúa on the Mexican Gulf. Judgment upon the proceedings of Cagigal was reserved for the King. The goods and slaves transported from Jamaica to Cuba as well as the vessels that had conveyed them were confiscated to the crown. Miranda was deprived of his commission, sentenced to pay a heavy fine, and banished for ten years to the presidio of Orán.⁵² An illuminating interpretation of this complicated affair was later made by Cagigal before a Spanish judge named Valcarcel to the effect that under the authority granted by royal orders he had permitted contraband merchandise to be admitted into Cuba in order that he might gather information about the activities of the English.⁵³ With regard to the peculiar rôle of his protégé, it seems not unfair to add that perhaps like other Spanish officials who served in the West Indies during the American Revolution, he aimed to reap private gain as well as public advantage from a participation in illicit trade.

In his sentence Vrunuela declared that Colonel Miranda was absent and rebellious. Although that colonel had arrived at Habana in September, 1782, and had been paid his salary, yet, before the judgment was pronounced, he had vanished.⁵⁴ In a letter to Bernardo de Gálvez on May 30, 1783, Cagigal stated that with his permission the disgraced officer was in the country restoring his health and that he would answer for his person to the court of Madrid. Further, he maintained that Miranda would vindicate himself to Charles III.⁵⁵

There can be no doubt that other persons than Cagigal were interested in Miranda's fate. In a confidential postscript of a letter from Governor Gálvez to Cagigal concerning Miranda's arrest that governor discreetly said that if he should uncover any papers of a prejudicial nature among the pris-

⁵² Vrunuela to José de Gálvez, April 19, 1783, A. G. I., audiencia de Santo Domingo, 84-2-9; inclosure in Allwood to Stoney, Dec. 23, 1783, F. O., 72/2.

⁵³ "Declaración que hizo en Cadiz Don Manuel de Cagigal ante el oidor Valcarcel acerca de Don Felipe Allwood," Eg. MSS., vol. 520, f. 318.

⁵⁴ Urriza to Cagigal, Jan. 13, 1783, Mir. MSS., vol. 4. ⁵⁵ Copy, *ibid.*

oner's effects he would burn them.⁵⁶ A sympathetic American acquaintance named James Seagrove had furnished Miranda with newspapers containing information about the United States. On November 26, 1782, he transmitted reports that he had received from Philadelphia respecting a military camp formed by General Washington at White Plains.⁵⁷ On the other side, it appears that through an American named Smith, the enterprising colonel had an account of the capitulation of the Bahamas published in a Baltimore gazette.⁵⁸

His service in the New World was notable for other reasons than the development of an interest in the United States. He later asserted that while in the West Indies he received representations from aggrieved provinces of Spanish America.⁵⁹ A document sedulously preserved among Miranda's papers shows that in 1781 and 1782 he was actually in communication with certain personages in Venezuela who were bitterly dissatisfied with the rule of their Spanish masters. From the city of Caracas, on February 24, 1782, Juan V. Bolívar, Martín de Tobar, and the Marqués de Mixares secretly addressed a missive to their "beloved fellow countryman," Francisco de Miranda. In that seditious letter, after stating that they had fully informed him in letters of July, 1781, about the lamentable situation of the province of Caracas which was groaning under the fiscal exactions of the Spanish intendant, they sent this significant message:

"From these circumstances you can see that we are confined to a dishonorable prison and treated worse than many negro slaves in whom their masters display more confidence. Thus there remains to us no other recourse than to cast off such an insupportable and infamous oppression (as you said in your letter to Don Francisco Arrieta). You are the eldest son from whom the Motherland expects this important service:—we are the younger brothers who on bended knees and with arms outstretched beseech this of you for the love of God!

⁵⁶ Aug. 8, 1782, *ibid.* ⁵⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 4.

⁵⁸ R. Smith to Miranda, Dec. 6, 1782, *ibid.*, vol. 21.

⁵⁹ *American Historical Review*, VI, 510.

At the first signal we are ready to follow you as our leader to the end and to shed the last drop of our blood in great and honorable enterprises! * * * We shall not take a single step except by your advice; for in your prudence we have placed all our hopes. * * * We send you the information which we believe necessary in order that in our name and in that of our entire province you may make compacts or contracts with our full power and consent. Lastly, if you judge it convenient, you may treat with foreign powers in order to redeem us from this cursed captivity.”⁶⁰

An exposé of Miranda's sentiments and intentions at this critical moment is found in two letters that he addressed from Matanzas to General Cagigal on April 16, 1783. In the first letter he declared that while the vessel in which he and Cagigal expected to voyage to Europe was being overhauled, there had arrived an agent of the Cuban governor in search of his person. “A little later, and before I returned to my inn,” he said, “I learned confidentially that because of dispatches which had just been received from Guarico or from Spain an order had actually been issued to arrest me and to deprive me of all means of communication. I therefore suspended my intention of returning to my abode and proceeded to a friend's house in order to thwart this attempt, to investigate the affair, to reflect upon it, and to reach the wisest decision.” Then he intimated that the charges against himself and Cagigal were calumnious, framed so as to destroy his honor and to wound his chief. “It is not the offender whom they seek,” continued Miranda, “but my person,—I who am more pure and innocent than Socrates. * * * Under this impression, and to check those harsh designs, I have resolved to withdraw myself from such domination, and to direct my journey toward Europe via the Anglo-American provinces of the North, whence I would write to His Majesty about the affair, beseeching him to deign to grant me a safe-conduct, so that without becom-

⁶⁰ Copy, Mir. MSS., vol. 45. In a memorial addressed to William Pitt on Mar. 18, 1799, Miranda stated that in 1782 he had entertained revolutionary propositions from Spanish-American colonists, see Pick. MSS., vol. XXIV, f. 150.

ing a victim to my enemies, I may proceed to Spain to vindicate my honor to a military court of impartial men and to demand formal reparation for my injuries."

In the second letter, which was marked "confidential," he stated that before reaching any decision about his future conduct he would await advice from Cagigal in Philadelphia. He then proceeded further to unfold his plan of travel:

"Nevertheless, in order that you may proceed in everything with the knowledge which is indispensable in such affairs, so that they may end as the interested party desires, I shall say to you that my intention in proceeding to the United States is not only to escape from the outrage that is designed against me, but also to begin at the same time those travels in foreign countries which you know it was my intention to undertake on the completion of the war. Because of this design I have cultivated the principal languages of Europe, as well as the sciences most useful to politics and to militarism,—an art that constitutes the profession in which fate and my birth have placed me since my earliest years. * * * All this seed that with no little labor and expense have been sown in my mind during the thirty years of my life remain as yet without fruit because of the failure to cultivate the plants at the proper season. The experience and knowledge that men acquire by visiting and personally examining with active intelligence in the great book of the universe the most wise and virtuous societies that compose it,—their laws, government, agriculture, police, commerce, military art, navigation, science, and art,—this is the only thing that can mature the fruit and in any manner complete the great work of forming a forceful personality! Thus I shall be indebted to you who can compound my affairs, if you will secure from His Majesty a royal license so that I may proceed for four years to England, Holland, France, Germany, Italy, and other countries in order to improve my defective education."⁶¹

Cagigal's response to this letter was furnished in an epistle

⁶¹ Note P, Miranda to Charles III, April 10, 1785, A. G. S., estado, 8141; drafts of these letters are found in Mir. MSS., vol. 25.

dated May 18, 1783, in which he expressed the opinion that the fugitive officer's business might have been adjusted in another mode than that which he had adopted. "Follow in a happy hour your own plan," said the Spaniard, "but, as a special favor, I beseech you in the name of my friendship and affection that until I inform you from Madrid of the outcome of this affair, you will neither make any decision nor alter your promises in any particular." Cagigal stated that justice and his duty required that he should inform the Spanish King of "the distinguished merit" of Miranda's services. "I must also make known the advantages that the State might derive from your knowledge and constant application. Envy follows merit as a shadow follows the body; thus your experience is not strange, for all persons who excel journey by that road, even though in every respect it is unjust and painful." Cagigal reminded his protégé that he had twice recommended him for appointment to a colonelcy with pay. "I hope that upon my arrival at the court of Madrid, this recommendation will be followed; that, when His Majesty is better informed of your character and services, you will gain greater recognition; that your friends will have the pleasure of seeing you the object of general applause in our country; and that I shall be able to gratify the paternal tenderness with which I have always regarded you."⁶²

It is evident that Miranda still enjoyed the confidence of his chief who was apparently unaware of the revolutionary ferment at work in his mind. In response to an inquiry the governor addressed a letter to Bernardo de Gálvez in which he declared in phrases which were somewhat misleading that the colonel was bound to present their plea for justice to Charles III. "He is absolutely pledged to my honor and to his own," said Cagigal, "to vindicate himself at the foot of the throne, as I have promised to my sovereign. I am responsible to the King for his person. Such is his destination, unless in the meantime His Majesty should decide otherwise."⁶³

⁶² Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, p. 254.

⁶³ May 30, 1783 (copy), Mir. MSS., vol. 4.

But the Spanish Government did not view Miranda's conduct with sympathy. In a sketch of his career that was circulated in South America it stigmatized him as a "perfidious man, an intriguer without any religion." It denounced him as an officer "whose conscience might rightly accuse him," who "realized that he was not safe on Spanish soil, and who consequently devised a flight."⁶⁴

Though Francisco de Miranda fled from the Spanish service in disgrace, yet he had profited greatly by his stirring experiences. He had been given a baptism of fire in fierce struggles with African Moslems. He had become acquainted with conditions in Spain and had gained some knowledge of evils prevailing in the Indies. His unpleasant experiences with Spanish officials in Europe and America had not heightened his appreciation of the Spanish administrative system. A receptive youth animated by loyalty to his King had been metamorphosed into a resentful man whose fidelity might well have been suspected. Brief contacts with Englishmen had awakened in him an abiding admiration for English society and institutions. Secretly he was collecting data about the attitude of the Spanish colonists to the Motherland. Although appeals had been made to him by oppressed compatriots in Venezuela, yet he had decided that it would be wise to postpone action until the independence of the Thirteen Colonies was acknowledged, a step which he seemed to consider a necessary preliminary of Spanish-American independence.

By his service under the Spanish banner against outlying English colonies Miranda promoted the cause of the American Revolution. His relations with soldiers who won the independence of the Thirteen Colonies, however, extended little farther than a participation with Spanish troops in the conquest of English posts near the Gulf of Mexico. With French Allies who took part in those operations presumably he became acquainted. Available records of his coöperation with American patriots demonstrate that during the Bahama cam-

⁶⁴ Medina, *Historia y bibliografía de la imprenta en Buenos-Aires*, p. 263.

paign he had unpleasant experiences with Carolinian insurgents. An entertaining legend long cherished by South American historical writers that he was a comrade of Lafayette and a soldier of Washington in the American Revolution is thus consigned to limbo.

Yet there had been awakened in the Venezuelan a genuine interest in the destiny of the United States. As was later suggested by a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, who was inspired by Miranda himself, "in a scene where the cause of liberty was the object of all men's zeal and enthusiasm," it was only natural that a design to emancipate South America should have taken root in his mind. An autobiographic annotation by Miranda on a copy of a memorial that he later sent to William Pitt indeed affirms that since 1782 he had been directed to solicit succor from England to promote the absolute independence of his native land. It seems scarcely an exaggeration to say that during Miranda's service under the flag of blood and gold in the American Revolution his own inner life had been revolutionized. The circumstance that her Allies had assisted the United States in this struggle had suggested to him the idea that the Spanish Indies might be emancipated by the aid of a foreign hand.

Chapter III

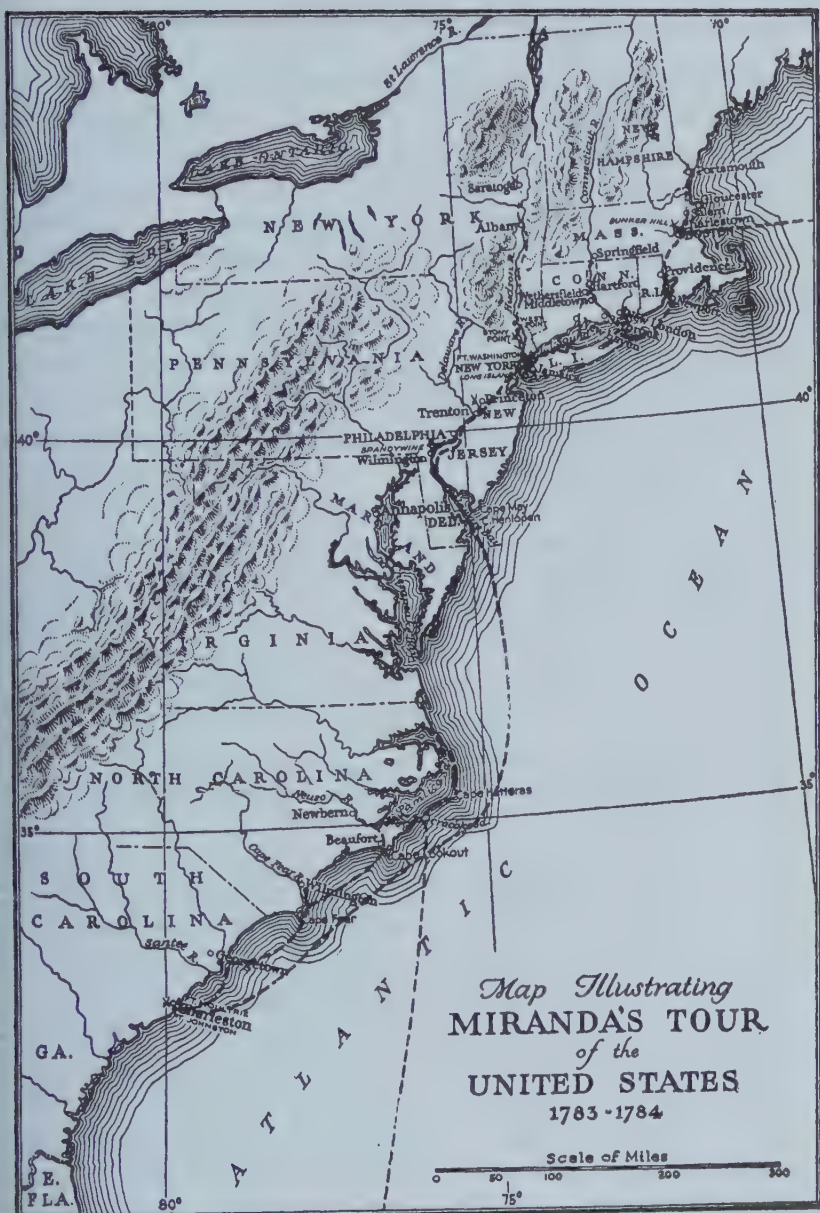
TOUR OF THE UNITED STATES

THE YOUNG Venezuelan had fixed his eyes upon the United States at an interesting juncture. The last battle of the American Revolution had been fought. A Preliminary Treaty of Peace between England and the Thirteen Colonies had been signed at Paris on November 30, 1782; and two months later preliminary articles of peace were signed by England, France, and Spain. On April 11, 1783, Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress, issued a proclamation announcing the cessation of hostilities by land and sea between England and the United States. At the suggestion of General Henry Knox, to perpetuate friendships that had developed during the war, an hereditary association of officers of the American army was formed which took the name of the Society of the Cincinnati. During the very month when Miranda decided to flee from Cuba, some American soldiers accepted furloughs.

Snugly ensconced on board an American sloop named the *Prudent*, on the morning of June 1, 1783, Miranda stole out of the harbor of Habana. By the aid of Cagigal he had succeeded in escaping from the toils laid by Spain's minions, and through the good offices of Seagrove he had obtained passage for the Carolinas. It appears that the latter had secured a pledge from the captain of the *Prudent* that he would allow the fugitive to disembark at Charleston. Yet Captain Wilson did not cast anchor until he had reached North Carolina. On the afternoon of June 10, 1783, Francisco de Miranda landed at Newbern.¹

He found lodging in a cozy tavern. His journal reveals the variety of novel impressions that surged upon his mind. Miranda soon became convinced that the social organization of the United States was in a primitive stage. In company with a future historian of North Carolina he admired the impos-

¹ Miranda, *Diary*, pp. 3-4.



From "The Diary of Francisco de Miranda," edited by W. S. Robertson. Reproduced by courtesy of the Hispanic Society of America.

ing "palace" that had been erected by Governor Tryon.² Under date of June 17 he wrote in his *Diary* that the people of Newbern had just celebrated the cessation of hostilities with England by a barbecue at which rum and roast beef were consumed by the common people, the country gentry, and the leading magistrates. "It is impossible," said Miranda, "to imagine a more purely democratic gathering,—one which illustrates all that Grecian poets and historians have told us about similar celebrations among the free peoples of Greece."³

Not only did he complain that during an excursion into the country his siesta was rudely interrupted by sallies of huge, unmentionable insects but also that he was sadly disturbed at night by the hoarse croaking of enormous bullfrogs. On the other hand, he much admired the mocking bird whose variety of tone and melody beggared description. In the middle of July the traveler arrived at Beaufort. Then he paid a visit to Wilmington where he was astonished to see peaches that were as large and as beautiful as oranges. At Wilmington and Georgetown he viewed fortifications that had been constructed by redcoats during the Revolution. A Carolinian acquaintance characterized the traveler as a "most agreeable" foreigner who was animated by "the most liberal Sentiments."⁴

On July 29 he sailed past Fort Moultrie and disembarked at Charleston.⁵ Through letters of introduction from Seagrove and Cagigal he was soon able to meet Governor Guerard and other dignitaries. Edward Rutledge, mayor of Charleston, soon made a formal call on the visitor to deliver a challenge from William Brailsford, an American who had become incensed at Miranda because of his conduct during the Bahama campaign. After Miranda had declared that he had a high opinion of Brailsford, that he had not been responsible for his imprisonment at New Providence, and that "so far

² Martin, *History of North Carolina*, II, 265. ³ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 6.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-13; S. Halling to Allibone, July 16, 1783, Mir. MSS., vol. 5.

⁵ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 14. Cf. Eustace, *Le citoyen des États-Unis d'Amérique*, pp. 6-7.

from intentionally reflecting on America, he had always respected and possessed a Friendship for her," that gentleman courteously withdrew his challenge.⁶ Among important publicists and army officers to whom Miranda stated that he was introduced by the governor at a reception were General Greene, Judge Heyward, Colonels Morris and Pinckney, Major Eustace, Dr. David Ramsey, Attorney General Moultrie, and Chief Justice Burke. Miranda added that, accompanied by an aide-de-camp, he inspected such scenes of revolutionary exploits as Forts Johnson and Moultrie.

In his visits to the courts of justice he imagined that he saw in operation "the admirable system" of the English Constitution. "The government of this State," said Miranda, "is purely democratic as are the governments of all the other states."⁷ During two short months he became well acquainted with prominent citizens of Charleston. Major John Eustace of Georgia on the eve of his departure from that gay metropolis, thus mirrored his views concerning the traveler. "I beg you will estimate my sentiments by the anxious ardor with which I have sought your society on all occasions; * * * I request you to accept my best and most unfeigned orisons for your health and happiness."⁸

Dr. Andrew Turnbull, an Englishman who had lost land grants in Florida largely because of his sympathy with the revolting colonists, gave Miranda letters of introduction to Colonel Barré, to the scientist and theologian, Dr. Priestley, and to the ex-premier, Lord Shelburne, which reflect his opinion of the Venezuelan. Shelburne was told that from Miranda he could obtain reliable information about the condition of South America. Priestley was informed that the object of Miranda's travels was "rather to converse with Men than to see Countries." The visitor was characterized as an "intelligent traveler and accurate observer of whatever can instruct

⁶ Inclosure in Miranda to Brailsford, "Vendredy," Mir. MSS., vol. 5.

⁷ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 25.

⁸ Eustace to Miranda, Oct. 3, 1783, Mir. MSS., vol. 5.



*The "Tryon Palace," Newbern, North Carolina. From a wash drawing.
Reproduced by courtesy of Marshall DeLancey Haywood.*

the Mind, or add dignity to human Nature. I beg the Favour also of your introducing this learned Stranger to such of your Friends as will conform him in the good opinion he has of our National Merit and Learning." The note to Barré said, in part, of Miranda: "The accidental Mention of his having taken the Character of General Wolfe as his Guide in the Military Career induced me to wish him the Advantage of being acquainted with you, Sir, as one of that General's most intimate Friends and as sharer with him in the dangers and Glories of an Expedition which though successful proved fatal to the brave Wolfe."⁹

The future historian, David Ramsey, wrote to a friend named Smith as follows:

"I have had so much pleasure and have acquired so much information from the bearer Col. de Miranda that I am desirous of the honor of introducing him to your acquaintance. He is a native of South America and of high rank in the army of his most Catholic Majesty. He loves liberty with an ardor that would do honor to the freest State in the world. He arrived here lately and has been respectfully noticed by the best people of this Metropolis. I wish him to be received with every mark of attention as he passes through the continent, and I am certain that men of sentiment and of inquisitive dispositions will be much delighted with his company."¹⁰

Early in November Miranda sailed from Charleston for Philadelphia. Upon disembarking at its busy wharves he was much impressed with "the multitude of vessels of all nations" which plied to that "beautiful, free, and commercial city." He secured accommodations in a hotel named the Indian Queen which he enthusiastically declared was the best in which he had ever lodged. His attention was soon attracted by Charles W. Peale's portraits of personages who had participated in the American Revolution. With keen interest the incipient revolutionary inspected the hall where the Second Continental Congress had frequently assembled to consider

⁹ A. Turnbull to Barré, Nov. 2, 1783, *ibid.*

¹⁰ Oct. 29, 1783, *ibid.*

“the great task of independence.”¹¹

In a short time he met the Spanish agent, Francisco Rendon, to whom he had a letter of introduction from Cagigal.¹² Totally ignorant of Miranda's escapades in the Spanish service, Rendon persuaded him to become a guest in his mansion and introduced him to his diplomatic associates. Through letters of introduction from Carolinian acquaintances, the quondam colonel met many of Philadelphia's leading citizens. Among other personages Miranda mentioned in his journal that he had become acquainted with Baron von Steuben, the former Prussian commander; Generals Arthur St. Clair and Anthony Wayne; Thomas Mifflin, president of Congress; Robert Morris, superintendent of finance; John Dickinson, governor of Pennsylvania; Caesar A. Luzerne, minister of France; his secretary, François de Barbé-Marbois; Peter J. Van Berckel, minister of Holland; a well-known physician named Benjamin Rush; the astronomer David Rittenhouse; and the rising politicians, F. A. Muhlenberg and Gouverneur Morris.¹³

The arrival at Philadelphia of General Washington, who was on his way to Annapolis to lay before Congress his resignation as commander in chief of the American army, was of special interest to Miranda. Read an apposite excerpt from his *Diary* describing the reception given to that military hero on December 8, 1783:

“Men, women, and children expressed as much contentment as though General Washington had been the Redeemer entering into Jerusalem,—such are the extravagant notions and sublime concepts entertained concerning this singular and fortunate man throughout the Continent. There is indeed no lack of philosophers who study Washington in the light of reason and who entertain a more just opinion of him than that which has been formed by leaders and by the common people. It is certainly very peculiar that although there are many illustrious persons in the United States who by their

¹¹ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 29.

¹² Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, pp. 252-53.

¹³ Miranda, *Diary*, pp. 30-31.

See the reverse

*My dear Sir, I have the honor of
 Col. Miranda's company at dinner
 on Wednesday next at 8 o'clock.
 Thursday Jan 7/1794.*

*mirano.
 Cobert
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de*

M. Linn

The Merchants of Philadelphia request
 the favor of your company to dine, on
 Friday next, at the City
 Tavern, and for a Ball at the Lodge, in
 the Evening.
 Dinner on table at three o'clock.
Colonel Miranda

*... de
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de*

London

*The Minister of the
 United Netherlands
 presents his compliments to
 Col. Miranda
 and requests the favour of his company
 to a Ball on the 8th Jan 7
 next, at 8 o'clock.
 Answer, if you please.*

*Colonel Char. ...
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de*

The Minister of France
 presents his compliments to
 Col. Miranda
 and requests the favour of his company
 to a Ball on the 8th Jan 7
 next, at 8 o'clock.
 Answer, if you please.

*... de
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de
 ... de*

The President presents his Compliments
 to Col. Miranda
 and requests the favour of his
 company to dinner, on Wednesday
 next, at 8 o'clock.

*... de
 ... de
 ... de*

Reduced facsimiles of cards which Miranda fastened between the leaves of his "Diary." From the Miranda Manuscripts.

virtue and talents promoted the great and complicated work of independence, yet on no other personage is there bestowed the general praise or the popularity that are accorded to this chieftain. Perhaps it is more correct to say that only he enjoys popularity: just as the rays of the sun, which are ordinarily dispersed in the atmosphere, when gathered into a focus produce an admirable effect in the realms of physics, so too the achievements of many individuals in the United States who aimed at independence are now gathered up as by a focus in Washington,—a usurpation as capricious as it is unjust! On the following day, accompanied by Rendon, I visited Washington and presented a letter of introduction from General Cagigal that gratified him. I had the pleasure of dining in his company during the time which he spent in Philadelphia. His demeanor is circumspect, taciturn, and inexpressive but a suave manner and great moderation make it endurable.”¹⁴

from Philadelphia
returning to Spain

Though there is no evidence to prove that Colonel Miranda confided his vague aspirations concerning the liberty of his native land to General Washington, yet this chance encounter made a vivid impression upon one who was destined to be the early paladin of Spanish-American independence.

Accompanied by new friends, in the end of December, 1783, Miranda made a trip by sleigh to Wilmington, Delaware. With Captain Rutherford, whom he had met at Gibraltar, he visited those sites that the British had fortified after the battle of Brandywine and studied the movements of the contending armies. After returning to Philadelphia he had some interesting conversations with Barbé-Marbois. Miranda complained in his *Diary* that the Frenchman was circulating false reports about his activities in the West Indies and about

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40. See also, Washington, *Calendar of the Correspondence of George Washington*, III, 2394. In a letter addressed by Miranda to Cagigal on January 11, 1784, he thus described his reception by Washington: "Las recomendaciones que v. me remitió para D. Francisco Rendon, y el General Washington, fueron entregados por mi prop^a mano á ambos sugetos que hicieron el maior aprecio, particularm^{te} el primero á quien ademas he merecido me franquease quanto en su Casa propa brindandome con quanto io necesitave y efectuiera en su poder." Mir. MSS., vol. 5.

Spain's participation in the American Revolution.¹⁵ To him the creole apparently predicted that an insurrection would soon break out in South America similar to the Revolution which had just ended in North America. Miranda gave Barbé-Marbois the impression that he had mentioned to Spanish officials the necessity of admitting foreigners into the Spanish colonies, and that he had intimated to these officials that an uprising of the Mexican aborigines in 1778 was "a warning of the highest importance."¹⁶

When it became publicly known in Philadelphia, however, that the loquacious colonel was a deserter from the Spanish service, he was no longer so popular in diplomatic circles. In this dilemma his secret pact with Cagigal, to proceed to Europe to seek justification from the Spanish King, was mentioned only to Rendon.¹⁷ There is reason to believe that the Spanish agent continued to be Miranda's sincere friend, although in his official capacity he felt constrained to treat him in a cautious manner. This agent sent a warning to his government that the vengeful officer had dropped hints of his intention to visit England and to present to the court of St. James certain plans for the capture of strongholds in Spanish America. Rendon also reported that he had induced Miranda to leave Philadelphia and to promise that he would proceed to London where he would await a communication from the Spanish court.¹⁸

In the middle of January, 1784, the discomfited tourist left Philadelphia bound for the North. In a sleigh drawn by four horses he crossed the river Delaware near the place where in December, 1776, Washington had made his perilous crossing. A stop at Princeton during the noon hour enabled Miranda to glance at New Jersey College. After his ferryboat had dodged floating ice in the Hudson River, he found in New

¹⁵ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 46.

¹⁶ Barbé-Marbois, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, pp. 161-62.

¹⁷ Miranda to Cagigal, Jan. 14, 1784, Mir. MSS., vol. 5.

¹⁸ Rendon to Gálvez, Jan. 4, 1784, A. G. I., audiencia de Santo Domingo, 84-2-9.

York City accommodations for himself and a servant. In the company of new acquaintances he soon visited Long Island, which he designated "the Hesperia of America." Miranda also inspected certain camps that had been occupied by English soldiers during the late war. He noticed the trenches that had been held by Washington's soldiers in 1776, and scaled the heights where General Sullivan had been captured by scarlet clad soldiers.¹⁹

On a trip to West Point, accompanied by Colonel Taylor, Miranda surveyed the positions that had been occupied by English soldiers and by American patriots in the battle of White Plains. Viewed from the heights, the Hudson River, which was being traversed by many sleighs, presented a "magnificent and extraordinary scene" to one who was unaccustomed to snow and ice. Upon being given letters of introduction from New York acquaintances, Colonel Hull, the commander of West Point, hospitably welcomed the visitor to his house. At once Miranda and his companion proceeded to view the magazines of arms and munitions as well as a model of the insignia for the Society of the Cincinnati. Next they examined the forts and redoubts near West Point. A blockhouse on the river's bank did not escape Miranda's keen eyes. He viewed the redoubt on Constitution Island, visited North Fort and South Fort, and also the fortifications constructed by Duportail, the French engineer.

Accompanied by some West Point officers, Miranda then proceeded by sleigh down the Hudson River. Thus he caught a glimpse of the ruins of Fort Montgomery. Near Stony Point he saw one of the camps that had recently been occupied by American and French soldiers. Colonel Hull, who had taken part in the attack, graphically described to Miranda the capture of Stony Point by "Mad Anthony,"—an exploit which the creole colonel depicted in his *Diary* as beyond doubt "one of the most brilliant actions of its kind that could be found in military history."²⁰

¹⁹ Miranda, *Diary*, pp. 46, 47, 51, 56. ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

During his stay in the city of New York, Miranda met many citizens of the New Republic. Prominent among them were Governor George Clinton, Colonel W. S. Smith, the lumberman Colonel William Duer, the ardent patriot Stephen Sayre, Chancellor Robert Livingston, and the intriguing genius, Alexander Hamilton. So favorably did Miranda impress Duer and Sayre that he secured from them the loan of a considerable sum of money which he used to defray the expense of his travels.²¹ With Henry Knox, a visiting New England general who had reorganized American artillery service during the Revolutionary War, Miranda struck up a cordial friendship. He met the itinerant Englishman, Thomas Paine, who had composed the flaming pamphlet *Common Sense* that early in 1776 crystallized American sentiment in favor of independence. In a letter written several years later Paine said that he first became acquainted with Miranda "at New York about the year 1783. He is a man of talents and enterprise, and the whole of his life has been a life of adventures."²²

In the end of May the South American made an excursion up the Hudson River beyond the Palisades. After disembarking at Albany he rode on horseback through a country which was so beautiful that he compared it with Cuba. His journal furnishes June 4 as the date on which he visited the battle field of Saratoga. Upon Bemis Heights he inspected the American trenches and redoubts. He also surveyed the position that had been occupied by the English army with its "devilish" entrenchments. He stated that these works with redoubts and advance posts had remained almost intact despite the fierce fire directed against them during the engagement. Yet Miranda noted that there was scarcely a tree near the site of the battle which did not bear scars of the conflict. He declared that he beheld the battery which had been bravely assaulted by the American general, Benedict Arnold, the spot where the

²¹ In 1784 Col. Duer evidently loaned Miranda \$1,336.67. See inclosure in J. Duer to Miranda, Jan. 9, 1805, Mir. MSS., vol. 50; on Sayre's loan see Sayre to Jefferson, Nov. 15, 1806, Jeff. MSS., series 2, vol. 77, no. 13.

²² Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, II, 22.

English general, Fraser, had been mortally wounded, and the place where the English commander, General Burgoyne, had pitched his tent.²³

It seems likely that Miranda gladly accepted an invitation to dine with members of the Society of the Cincinnati on Monday, July 5, 1784.²⁴ While sojourning in New York City the resentful refugee broached a scheme for the liberation of his native land to Henry Knox and Alexander Hamilton. Before departing from this city he evidently obtained from Hamilton a list of military officers of the United States that began with the name of General Washington. Among the personages in this list whose names were marked to indicate that they were considered of special importance were Colonels Lee and Laurens and also Generals Greene, Steuben, and Knox.

A copy of this list that is preserved in Miranda's manuscripts bears the indorsement, "Note of Mr. Hamilton."²⁵ This roll was obviously connected with those grand projects that in a letter to Hamilton in 1792 Miranda declared they had considered in New York City.²⁶ Several years later the American indeed admitted that he had "had frequent conversation" with the Venezuelan about the liberation of the Spanish Indies, that presumably he had favored this design, and that he had perhaps expressed the opinion that the United States would be interested in such an enterprise.²⁷ According to a memoir which Miranda later composed, it was at this very juncture that his notions about the emancipation of South America began to crystallize. "In the year 1784, in the city of New York," he recorded, "I formed a project for the liberty and independence of the entire Spanish-American Continent with the coöperation of England. That nation was naturally

²³ Miranda, *Diary*, pp. 69-71.

²⁴ B. Walker and J. Fairlie to Miranda, July 2, 1784, Mir. MSS., vol. 5.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 45. Other names in this list were the following: Marquis Lafayette, Generals Duportail, St. Clair, Wayne, Cols. Dearborn, Ogden, Putnam, and Lt. Cols. Burr and Hull.

²⁶ Miranda to Hamilton, Nov. 4, 1792, *ibid.*; see also, Miranda, *Diary*, p. 157, note 306, and *infra*, pp. 126-27.

²⁷ Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 251-52; and *infra*, p. 177.

much interested in the design, for Spain had furnished a precedent by forcing her to acknowledge the independence of her colonies in America.”²⁸ Among papers concerning his American tour that the plotter preserved was a copy of the *Letters from Phocion*, in which Hamilton avowed that the “influence of our example” had “penetrated the gloomy regions of despotism,” and “pointed the way to inquiries which may shake it to its deepest foundations.”²⁹

Miranda doubtless passed many pleasant hours in the company of New York friends and acquaintances. An illustration of the variety of his interests is found in the following note: “Judge Hobart’s most respectful Compliments to Col. de Miranda, the Jury has just returned to Court and found the Rioters Guilty.”³⁰ Another billet contains these informing passages:

“Mrs. Montgomery with her best Compliments returns Colonel Miranda two of his books—the third, Helvet—she has absolutely fallen love with—and cannot think of parting with it. She has however by way of compensation left a history of the last war in America written by an officer who was an Eyewitness to what he wrote * * *. Mrs. Montgomery still flatters herself that by chance she shall see the Col. before his departure from this country. Yet should that moment not arrive, she wishes him to accept her prayers for his further happiness and her thanks for his many attentions.”³¹

After his departure from New York City, Miss Eliza Livingston wrote to Miranda to chide him for not informing her of his itinerary and to tease him about his gallant attentions to the ladies while in New York. “Surely when in this City,” she said, “you greatly approved of female society.”³² In a letter written early in 1785, she added: “Sayre stays this winter with your friends the Duers. I never meet those men but they speak of you, and drink the health of the Queen of the *Incas*.”³³

²⁸ “Para Gensoni en Paris,” Oct. 10, 1792, Mir. MSS., vol. 27.

²⁹ Hamilton, *Works*, II, 329. ³⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 5. ³¹ Undated letter, *ibid.*

³² Oct. 23, 1784, *ibid.*, vol. 44. ³³ Feb. 28—Mar. 12, 1785, *ibid.*

To William Duer the traveler had confided his intention to visit England. In a letter to an Englishman who was a friend of Lord North, Duer gave his impressions of Miranda:

"This Gentleman is from Disposition and Reflection a Citizen of the World, which he traverses with a View of Increasing a Stock of Knowledge, which is already far from being Inconsiderable.

"It is not therefore surprising that he has formed a Determination of visiting England, which has been long Considered by Intelligent Foreigners as the Nation of Philosophers: or that he should wish to form an Acquaintance with the great Characters in which it abounds. * * * He will be found a very Interesting Acquaintance, and will I doubt not by Exchange of Useful Information in Matters of Science and Politics, endeavor to Compensate for any valuable Communications which you and my Friends may impart to him on the Constitution, Commerce, and Government of your Country." ⁸⁴

Letters of introduction furnished to Miranda by other American friends show that they had become aware that he had a special motive in visiting the United States. In a letter to Thomas Russell, General Knox described his new acquaintance as "a Spanish Gentleman, and an enthusiast in the cause of Liberty. * * * He possesses an extensive knowledge of men and things, and his opportunities have been exceeded only by his eagerness to improve them." ⁸⁵ To James Swan, Knox said that this foreigner desired "to view more nearly the scene where such great things had been performed by comparatively small means." ⁸⁶ Of Governor Hancock of Massachusetts the general asked permission to introduce "a Spanish Gentleman who, with talents perfectly formed for the purpose, is desirous of seeing N. America and those Characters, who have materially contributed to effect a revolution, which is

⁸⁴ To Wm. Brummele, Feb. 12, 1784 (copy), *ibid.*, vol. 21.

⁸⁵ Undated copy, *ibid.*, vol. 5.

⁸⁶ Undated copy, *ibid.*

contemplated through Europe with astonishment.”³⁷

It is possible that Miranda mentioned his revolutionary designs to Baron von Steuben, a Prussian who had served on the staff of Frederick the Great and had also acted as inspector general of the American army during the Revolutionary War. General Steuben presented Miranda with a copy of his treatise on military discipline which had been highly serviceable to American patriot officers. On July 23, 1784, he wrote to Miranda to express regret at his impending departure and to hope that he might again enjoy his conversation. “My best wishes will accompany you everywhere. May you be as happy as you deserve to be!”³⁸ Thus did the Prussian disciplinarian bid farewell to the future dictator of Venezuela.

Two days later Miranda disembarked at New Haven from the sloop *Friendship*. It was Sunday afternoon, and he noticed that the streets were deserted, “for all the world had gone to church.”³⁹ After securing lodgings in the coffee house kept by Mrs. Smith, he listened to a sermon by a well-known Boston divine. On July 26 he visited President Stiles of Yale College and presented letters of introduction from acquaintances in New York.⁴⁰ Dr. Stiles accompanied him to the college where Miranda visited classes in algebra and Hebrew, attended prayers in the chapel, and drank a glass of wine with some tutors. On the following day he went to the campus again and was allowed to examine the President’s interesting manuscripts. While visiting the college library Miranda inspected a curious Latin tome that contained passages from the Holy Scriptures with execrable illustrations. He noted in his *Diary* that certain halls were adorned by portraits of Yale’s benefactors. He climbed the rugged hill called West Rock in order to peer into the famous cave that for several years had sheltered one of the regicide judges.⁴¹

On July 29 Miranda again visited Yale College. On this occasion he saw some students delivering declamations or ha-

³⁷ April 28, 1784 (copy), Mir. MSS., vol. 5. ³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 77. ⁴⁰ Stiles, *Literary Diary*, III, 130.

⁴¹ Miranda, *Diary*, pp. 77-79.

rangues. In his journal he described this exercise as "an excellent method to accustom them to speak in public and to impart grace to movement and expression."⁴² As President Stiles wrote in his *Diary* that Miranda had not only traveled to Madrid but had also visited Paris, Rome, Naples, Venice, and London, it would seem that the visitor either prevaricated or was misunderstood. There is no doubt that Miranda convinced the President that he had a perfect acquaintance with the policy and history of "all Spanish America." He described to Stiles the colleges of South America and Mexico. He stigmatized the learning of the Mexicans as "inferior, trifling, and contemptible." Mexico had no "great Literary Characters," he asserted; for there a genius dared "not *read* nor *think* nor *speak*, for fear of the Inquisition." On July 30 Miranda left New Haven on horseback bound for Boston. In his journal President Stiles characterized him as "a learned Man and a flaming Son of Liberty."⁴³

At Wethersfield on August 1, which was Sunday and consequently "a church day," Miranda went to a meeting-house with Colonel and Mrs. Chester. There he particularly admired the singing which he declared was the most solemn and ecclesiastical that he had ever heard on the American Continent. In the evening of August 4,—so runs his journal,—he mounted the Boston stagecoach and rode through a picturesque region to Hartford. Thence he traveled via Windsor to Springfield. The customs of New England impressed him as ultrademocratic. "I shall not refrain from mentioning here," he wrote in his *Diary* concerning an inn, "that the spirit of republicanism is so strong in this country that the coachman who drives the stage and all the other guests sat together at the same table. It was with no small difficulty that I arranged that my servant should eat by himself."⁴⁴

At Springfield the tourist was particularly interested in the factories of arms that adjoined the arsenal. He noted that

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 79. ⁴³ Stiles, *op. cit.*, III, 130-31; Stiles' MS. *Diary*.

⁴⁴ Miranda, *Diary*, pp. 82-83.

some cannon and small arms of French make were still stored there. While the horses of the stagecoach were resting at Windsor he noticed a comely young woman reading a translation of Rollin's *Histoire Ancienne*. In answer to his inquiry, she unhesitatingly responded that in her judgment Franklin was superior to Aristides. Miranda recorded the opinion that the books of the Hartford Public Library were used more than the tomes which were so carefully preserved in the *Biblioteca* of the Escorial. He attended a tea party in the house once occupied by Silas Deane, the first agent of the Thirteen Colonies to France. From Middletown, where he conversed with some officers who had served in the American Revolution, he sailed in a sloop down the Connecticut River to New London. While on a visit to Norwich, he called on General Huntington, sipped tea with some ladies, and, as was his custom, strolled through a cemetery to scan inscriptions on tombstones.

Near the end of August the voyager arrived at Newport. Letters of introduction soon enabled him to dine with new acquaintances. Miranda enjoyed the salubrious air of "the paradise of New England," where he beheld with pleasure sleek cattle grazing in verdant pastures. He surveyed the forts and redoubts that had been constructed by the English and by the French during the Revolutionary War, and viewed the route that had been taken by General Sullivan's retreating patriots. Not only did he examine various batteries and forts in the adjacent bay but he also made a pilgrimage to the farmhouse where in 1777 the English commander, General Prescott, was surprised and captured by American soldiers. This exploit he described as "one of the most brilliant actions of its kind executed either in ancient or modern times."⁴⁵ In his *Diary* he recorded that during a visit to the cemetery he paused a moment in front of a monument erected in honor of Chevalier de Ternay, who was commodore of the squadron that in 1780 convoyed transports which carried auxiliary sol-

⁴⁵ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 106.

diers from France to New England.

On September 9 Miranda took a room in Rice's tavern at Providence. In his usual fashion he soon made new acquaintances. These included Dr. Moyes of Edinburgh, Scotland, who was delivering a series of lectures on natural history and the philosophy of chemistry. Miranda could not refrain from viewing the fortifications that General Sullivan had constructed at Fox Point for defense against the English. He visited a court of justice where he admired the talent of the judges and lawyers. On September 14, according to his *Diary*, he dined with Rev. James Manning, who was president of Rhode Island College. Miranda recorded that this college commanded a splendid view but that its library and scientific apparatus were scarcely of collegiate rank. Its charter he found to be liberal and well-designed, while the cost of education was very low. Commodore Hopkins, whom the inquisitive traveler visited at his residence near Providence, he characterized as an ignorant and vulgar person whose geographical knowledge was very slight. After attending divine service in an Anabaptist meeting-house as well as in a church frequented by the "New-Lights," early on the morning of September 15, he again mounted a stagecoach en route for Boston.⁴⁶

Among prominent people whom he soon met in that city were Governor Hancock, James Bowdoin, General Henry Jackson, Dr. James Lloyd, Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, and Rev. Joseph Willard. With a new-found friend Miranda soon ascended Beacon Hill. Accompanied by General Knox, who was now in Boston, he viewed the state house and the court house. He wrote in his *Diary* that the "best building is the church which they call King's Chapel." His visits to the state house made him doubt the wisdom of intrusting the citizenry with legislative authority. He passed judgment on the lawgivers in this critical passage:

"On various occasions I attended meetings of the Massa-

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 113; Manning to Miranda, undated, Mir. MSS., vol. 6.

chusetts legislature where I beheld in patent fashion the defects and inconveniences which this democracy suffers because legislative power is placed entirely in the hands of ignorant men. In the midst of a debate that he did not understand one legislator was reciting verses which he knew by heart. After the assembly had been discussing a subject for two hours, another legislator inquired before voting what was the motion before the house. Most of the legislators are of this caliber. In these democratic assemblies the most absurd and unjust measures have been proposed, debated, and approved throughout this continent.”⁴⁷

While sojourning in Boston the traveler was gratified to meet “the famous republican,” Samuel Adams, with whom he conversed at length about certain defects of the Massachusetts Constitution. “He gave me,” added Miranda in his journal, “much interesting information about the origin, principles, and occurrences of the recent Revolution, and treated me in a familiar manner.”⁴⁸ The same source informs us that James Bowdoin, who had been president of the Massachusetts constitutional convention, also furnished Miranda with “very interesting information about the events of the late Revolution and its true origin.”⁴⁹ The personality of General Knox made a vivid impression on Miranda. A characterization in his *Diary* reads in this wise: “Among all the military chieftains whom I have met in this country, even including the Idol, General Knox is one of the best informed on the theory and practice of war. His bearing is agreeable, and his conversation is interesting.”⁵⁰

Another diarial entry ran as follows: “In the suburbs of Boston and near all the roads may be found fortifications that were constructed by the English or the Americans during the siege of this city.”⁵¹ On his way to Cambridge, Miranda surveyed the site of the battle of Bunker Hill. With histor-

⁴⁷ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 120.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* On Nov. 23, 1784, Bowdoin wrote a note to Miranda inviting him to tea and thanking him for the loan of a book, Mir. MSS., vol. 21.

⁵⁰ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 119.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

ical insight he saw that confusion might arise by the careless use of that name for the battle which in reality was fought on Breed's Hill. "What difficulties," asked he in his journal, "will not be caused to posterity when its Polybuses, who will travel in order to write with truth and dexterity the history of the present age, find such contradictions between the correct name of the site and the name of the event, especially as a monument now erected to immortality upon the very site of the battle does not clear up this doubt?" The itinerant apostle of liberty presumably also made a pilgrimage to Faneuil Hall.⁵²

Accompanied by Dr. Waterhouse and other tutors Miranda paid a visit to Harvard College. With surprise he noticed that the habitations of both students and teachers were utterly devoid of adornments. The library he considered well arranged, and its books not badly selected, but he thought that the museum of natural history scarcely merited its name. He viewed a spacious room that was hung with portraits of Harvard's benefactors. At the refectory he partook with some students of a frugal repast composed of cabbage, potatoes, and salt pork, with bread and cheese, and a little cider. When the visitor returned to the college to inspect the apparatus that was used to give instruction in natural philosophy, he dined by invitation with President Willard, and presented him with a silver medal that had been minted in Mexico to commemorate the founding of her academy of law. "It appears to me," said Miranda in his *Diary*, "that Harvard College is better adapted to train clergymen than to mould capable and well-informed citizens. Certainly it is extraordinary that Harvard does not even have a single professorship of the living languages, and that the chair of theology is the most important chair in the college."⁵³

About the middle of October, 1784, Miranda departed from Charlestown by stagecoach. At Salem he stopped long enough

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 122. Among his papers Miranda filed a card on which was printed the following: "Admit the Bearer to Dine at Faneuil-Hall on Tuesday, 19th October. Dinner ½ past 2 O'Clock," Mir. MSS., vol. 6.

⁵³ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 123.

to pay a visit to Gallows Hill where witches had been executed in "an age of crass fanaticism." He recorded in his journal that he read in the town archives of a woman who had been fined and scourged for not having attended church. Nevertheless he noted that although the soil of New England was poor "yet such is the industry and the spirit with which liberty inspires the people that from a small plot of ground they raise enough produce to support their large families, to pay heavy taxes, and to live in comfort and enjoyment,—a thousand times more happy than the proprietors of fertile lands and rich mines in Mexico, Peru, La Plata, Venezuela, or indeed in any part of Spain's American dominions!"⁵⁴

Still, on being compelled to pay double the ordinary fare for crossing a stream by ferry on Sunday, the critical traveler commented unfavorably on what he designated as a religious stratagem. While sojourning at Portsmouth in the company of Colonel Langdon, Miranda visited the city hall, dined with the president of New Hampshire, and listened to a discussion of the defects of its new Constitution. He next attended some sessions of the legislature which was translating that fundamental law into action. There he was astounded to behold a group of pastors presenting a memorial to the legislators,—a procedure that he thought disclosed "the ambition and vanity of the clergymen as well as the simplicity and prepossessions of the people."⁵⁵ At a tea party in Langdon's house, he became acquainted with the presidents of two small New England colleges who spent two mortal hours in a tiresome discussion of ecclesiastical problems. "If one should judge of those institutions by their preceptors," wrote Miranda, "there is no small amount of pedantry in such seminaries."⁵⁶

While in New England he evidently mentioned to casual acquaintances the scheme that he was meditating in regard to his native land. At the home of Dr. Lloyd, where he was invited to dinner,⁵⁷ Miranda's conversation vividly impressed

⁵⁴ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 129. ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 135. ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 134-35.

⁵⁷ Lloyd to Miranda, Oct. 18, 1784, Mir. MSS., vol. 21.

the physician's youthful son. More than twenty years later he said that Miranda appeared to him as "the most extraordinary, and wonderfully energetic man that I had ever seen; * * * his darling theme was the prospect of revolutionizing the Spanish provinces of South America; * * * While commenting on these subjects with great vehemence of enthusiasm and severity of denunciation, and in a rapid impassioned and commanding eloquence, with his whole frame in motion, and pacing the room with giant strides, he presented to my juvenile imagination a new and apparently more elevated sample of the human character, and seemed capable of leading a People impatient of their Government, and ripe for its subversion to any deeds of daring to which his ambitions might direct them." ⁵⁸ The revolutionary conspirator observed with much interest the visit to New England of Marquis Lafayette, the dashing French hero of the American Revolution. In his journal Miranda thus delineated Washington's comrade in arms:

"Marquis Lafayette arrived when I was in Boston. I took occasion to meet him. To me he appears to be a mediocre character who is endowed with the activity and perpetual motion of a Galician. * * * This trip of the Marquis appears to me to be one of those sleight of hand performances by which France tries to delude mankind, and which on many occasions produces the desired effect. Yet to the eyes of discerning persons such performances are only ridiculous political farces. These guileless people, as yet inexpert in politics, have made excessive and absurd demonstrations of pleasure, even in such small towns as Marblehead; so that in order to receive adulation the hero has passed from one town to another with the velocity of a Rolando." ⁵⁹

At Boston, on the eve of his departure from New England, Miranda's designs concerning the Spanish Indies assumed form. The project that he had dimly envisaged at New York under the stimulus of Hamilton's sympathy was now given a definite outline by Knox's coöperation. A letter sent to Mi-

⁵⁸ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 250.

⁵⁹ Miranda, *Diary*, p. 121.

randa by Knox from Dorchester on October 11, 1784, suggests the degree of intimacy that had been reached in their friendship:

"I beg a thousand pardons for not having seen you during the week past. It was my fixed determination to have called upon you almost each day but a number of perverse accidents frustrated my intentions. If you are unengaged, and could do me the pleasure of passing this day at Dorchester, the servant with the carriage has directions to wait your time. We have no company."⁶⁰

It was presumably in conferences held between October 11 and November 23 that Knox and Miranda formulated a plan for coöperation from New England in the revolutionizing of the Spanish Indies.⁶¹ This is made plain by illuminating memoranda dated November 23, 1784. These documents deal with a scheme to raise soldiers in New England for the liberation of the Spanish-American colonies. Among them is an "Estimate of the supposed expences of raising, clothing, and arming five thousand men, fully officered, and divided into proportions of Infantry, Cavalry, and Artillery, and all the other necessaries for immediate operation. Provisions and Ammunition for one Year."⁶²

This plan proposed that five thousand men should be enlisted in New England to serve for five years at a bounty of fifty dollars apiece. Whether infantry, cavalry, or artillery the soldiers were to be paid at an average rate of sixty dollars per month. The military supplies were to include five thousand muskets, five thousand bayonets, fifty cannon or howitzers of different calibers, and five hundred rounds of ammunition for each cannon and each musket. An estimate of twenty

⁶⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

⁶¹ In a letter to Knox, Nov. 4, 1792, Miranda mentioned "those schemes our patriotism suggested to our minds in our Semposiums at Boston," Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 291. In a letter addressed to Knox on October 19, 1798, Miranda said: "Enfin tout semble se reunis pour que nos projets de l'année 1784 s'accomplissant. . . . J'espere que vous tiendres vos promesses, et que bientot j'aurai l'honneur d' aller vous prendre chez nous!" Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

⁶² "1784, Boston, Papers relative to North America," Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

thousand dollars annually was included for hospital expenses, and one million dollars were allowed for contingent expenses. While the date and the title of these estimates are evidently in Miranda's handwriting, yet in his index to this volume of his manuscripts the original memoranda are ascribed to General Knox, and they are in a handwriting that is evidently Knox's.⁶³ With these documents Miranda filed that list of military officers which, as we have noticed, he had framed in New York by the aid of Alexander Hamilton.

This grand project was doubtless what he had in mind when in his later correspondence with Knox, the plotter mentioned the scheme considered during the "symposiums" that they had held in Boston.⁶⁴ Further, we know that when Miranda departed from New England he left with Knox a copy of a cipher.⁶⁵ Evidence emanating from both Hamilton and Knox thus lends an air of credibility to Miranda's later assurances to an English naval officer who became interested in his design that he laid his plan "before Generals Washington, Knox, and Hamilton, who promised him every assistance and gave him assurances of raising troops in the province of New England, provided he could persuade Great Britain to assist with her navy."⁶⁶ However, this statement exaggerated the encouragement which the American generals gave to Miranda. Aside from a visiting card of General Washington that Miranda later fastened between the pages of his *Diary*, there is no evidence emanating from the triumphant American commander to show that he ever evinced any interest in the ambitious project of the Venezuelan prophet of liberty.

Whether Miranda was aware of it or not, the court of Madrid was already suspicious of his designs. On being prematurely informed that the fugitive had sailed from the

⁶³ *Ibid.* The entry in the index reads: "Knox's estimate & ca. for raising 5,000 Men." Cf. Miranda, *Indice*, p. 52.

⁶⁴ Miranda to Knox, Nov. 4, 1792, Knox MSS., vol. 32, f. 176.

⁶⁵ Miranda to Knox, Apr. 9, 1791, *ibid.*, vol. 28, f. 119.

⁶⁶ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VI, 510. The views which Hamilton later expressed about Miranda may be found *infra*, p. 177.

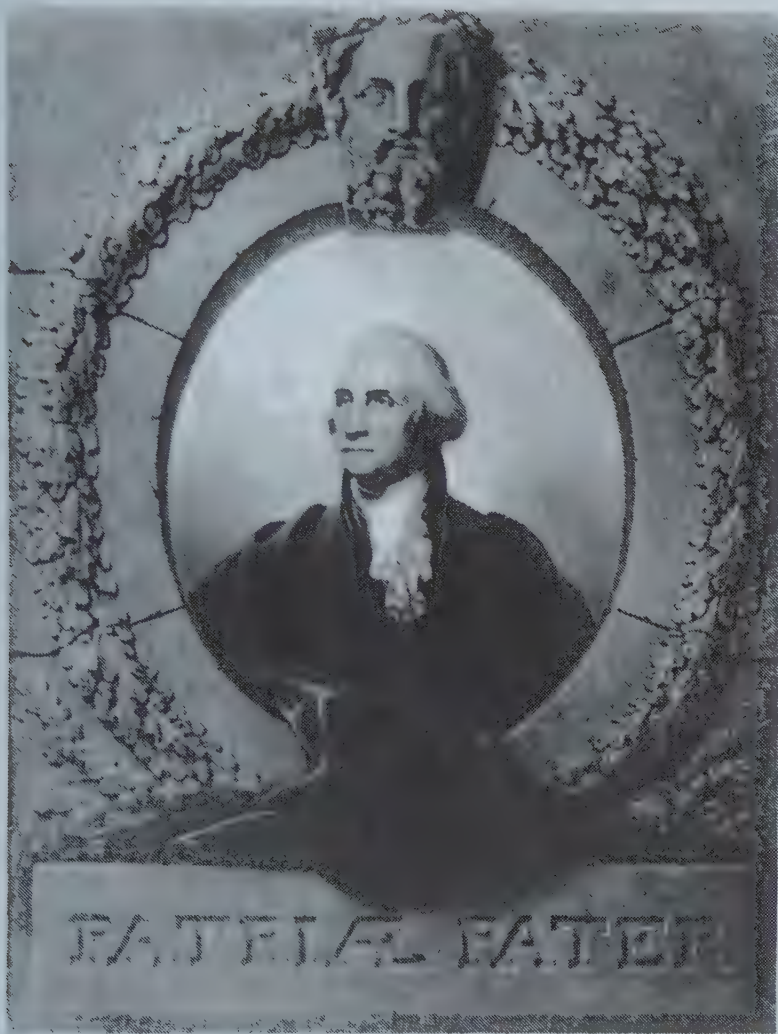
United States for Europe, the chief Secretary of State of Charles III, Count Floridablanca, wrote to Bernardo del Campo, the Spanish minister in London, directing him to make a formal demand upon the English Government that Miranda should be delivered up to Spain as a prisoner of state. A memorandum prepared for Floridablanca gave the Spanish view of his defection. It declared that he had abused his authority on the mission to Jamaica by purchasing merchandise which "he introduced clandestinely into Habana with the protection and aid of Governor Cagigal. Because of this, by order of the King, a suit was instituted against the contrabandist. As Miranda considered himself to be the chief conspirator, in order to escape his just deserts, he took the decision to abandon his employment and to proceed to the United States where he has divulged that he will voyage to London to furnish information to the English Government and to present projects against Spain." ⁶⁷

The suspected conspirator had profited much by his visit to North America. He had improved his knowledge of the English language and had become acquainted with the parties and politics of the United States. He had studied the maneuvers of contending armies in the struggle that had rendered asunder the British Empire. Not only had he examined the fortifications of Charleston, Philadelphia, New York, Newport, and Boston, but he had inspected the battle fields of Bunker Hill, Brandywine, and Saratoga. From the lips of military chieftains he had listened to graphic descriptions of memorable revolutionary exploits. In the extravagant words of John Adams it was a general opinion in the States "that Miranda knew more of every campaign, siege, battle, and skirmish that had ever occurred in the whole war, than any officer of our army, or any statesman in our councils." ⁶⁸

With the highest zest Miranda had beheld popular acclamations in North America when news was received that seces-

⁶⁷ Sept. 13, 1784, and inclosure, A. G. S., estado, legajo 8139.

⁶⁸ Adams, *Works*, X, 135.



George Washington. Painting by Charles W. Peale. In the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia.

sion from England was an accomplished fact. The American spirit of religious toleration affected him profoundly. Commendable traits in the administration of the emancipated colonies he was inclined to ascribe rather to the excellences of the English Constitution than to any intrinsic virtue in the institutions that had been evolving upon American soil. With a critical reaction he had beheld certain manifestations of democratic spirit among citizens of the States. Yet the tone of happiness that ordinarily prevailed among the people of the New Republic made an enduring impression upon his spirit. The amorous adventures of Miranda with American ladies incited a Mexican littérateur to liken him to Casanova.

Among the large group of friends and acquaintances that he had made during his American tour there were a select number, notably Knox, Smith, and Hamilton, that he believed would be ready to help him in the execution of his secret project to emancipate the Indies from Spanish rule. It does not appear, however, that he had determined to undertake such an enterprise at once. He still cherished the intention of making a tour of Europe to complete his education and to improve his knowledge of military affairs.

On November 29, 1784, Miranda paid Captain Callahan twenty-two guineas for his passage in the ship *Neptune* from Boston to London.⁶⁹ Among the letters of introduction that the tourist carried with his cherished papers was one from William Duer to George Rose, "Secretary to the Treasury, Whitehall, London." Simply as a contemporary estimate of Miranda, it is worth quoting at length:⁷⁰

"This Letter will be delivered to you by my particular Friend Col. Miranda, late Secretary to Genl. Cagigal, the governor of the Havanna, and an officer of distinguished merit in the Spanish Service.

"He has unhappily for him met with that Fate, which has

⁶⁹ Callahan's receipt, Mir. MSS., vol. 7. Miranda had evidently contemplated a visit to British America; for in a "Lista de Cartas de Recomendacion" (*ibid.*, vol. 5) there are some letters labelled "Canada." ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 5.

too often befallen the man of Virtue and Talents in an Arbitrary Government, the Persecution of bigoted and Intriguing Men; and it is not Improbable but the same Spirit of his Enemies may Endeavor to Extend itself to him during his Residence in England which he visits with a View of enlarging the Circle of his Knowledge, till the Storm which has been Unjustly raised against him is blown over. You will do an act of singular Justice and Humanity in aiding him with your advice, in promoting his Happiness and Security whilst he resides amongst you; and should he judge it advisable for attaining the last Object to have a Conference with the present Prime Minister, will you take him by the hand, and favor me with being his Introducer.

“I shall not give Pain to the Feelings of my Friend to whom this Letter is delivered open, by saying what I think of his Abilities and merit as you will thank me when we have the Pleasure of meeting for giving you so valuable an Acquaintance, who will be able to give you not only a very accurate detail of that unexplored Country of which he is a native, but a much more just account of the Resources, Genius, and State of Politics of the United States than you would be able to obtain from most of its natives.”

Chapter IV

ADVENTURES IN EUROPE

ON BOARD the *Neptune*, which carried a few other passengers and some sixty thousand guineas in specie, on December 15, 1784, Francisco de Miranda sailed from Boston. The voyager took note of the winds, the weather, and the course of the ship. His companions were in good humor, each whiling away the time according to his fancy. At his leisure Miranda read works on history and philosophy. He noticed that during the night of January 21 the mariners discerned the warning rays of a lighthouse on the Scilly Isles. After skirting the southern coast of England, where the passengers gazed at the famous chalk cliffs, on the afternoon of January 31 the ship cast anchor in the river Thames. A day later Miranda rode through London in a hackney coach to a hotel in Pall Mall.

The metropolis of the country that he had long admired from afar was soon delineated by Colonel Miranda as an immense capital. He wrote to General Knox that he was much impressed by the infinite number of objects and the multitude of people that he had seen. He sent the general a grammar and a dictionary, presumably of the Spanish language. With the intention of presenting a complaint about the persecution to which he had been subjected in the West Indies, the colonel visited the Spanish legation but the Minister was absent. Anxious to become informed about the activities of the recreant officer, Bernardo del Campo soon returned the call, but Miranda was not at home. Yet through divers hirelings Campo undertook to spy upon Miranda's movements; and he soon began a series of reports to Madrid about the conspirator.

In an undated dispatch the Spanish Minister warned his court that through letters of introduction Miranda had become acquainted with many Englishmen and that he made no secret of his grievances against Spain. Campo's informers expressed the opinion that the suspect had "much talent, great discernment, and more than ordinary intelligence," but that

he was a fanatical champion of liberty. The Minister declared that Miranda possessed plans of Spanish strongholds in America and that he had actually displayed to certain persons a plan of the Habana fortifications. "I am assured," wrote Campo, "that he has in his possession other manuscripts of the greatest importance. Among these papers are instructive memoirs concerning the actual condition of various provinces in the Spanish Indies, projects relating to campaigns in the American Revolution, the correspondence of our court with its commanders by land and sea, as well as the correspondence of those officers with each other and with French commanders." Campo was startled by reports that Miranda proposed to submit copies of important documents to the English Government and was convinced that his quarry was capable of promoting zealously "any audacious project" which might be proposed by Spain's enemies. "The master stroke," said the intriguing Spaniard, "would be to burn Miranda's manuscripts or to steal them" before he could use them "in an evil manner."¹

On April 26 Colonel Miranda made another visit to the Spanish legation and left a packet of papers with a request that Campo should forward it to Madrid. Among these documents was a letter for Count Floridablanca dated April 10, 1785, declaring that because of the royal confidence which this Minister enjoyed, Miranda had addressed a petition to him in order that it might be presented to the King. In reality this petition was an autobiographical sketch that emphasized the colonel's military service. The persecution to which he had been subjected in the West Indies was ascribed to the covert influence of jealous enemies. The officer alleged that Cagigal, whom he believed to be incarcerated in a Spanish dungeon, had had no share in his escape from Habana. With indignation Miranda avowed that the accusations against him were false and that he had labored under the disadvantage of be-

¹ Campo to Floridablanca, undated, A. G. S., estado, 8141.

ing a creole. He besought Charles III formally to dismiss him from the royal service and to reimburse the price of his captivity.²

In view of the designs that Miranda secretly entertained in regard to the liberation of the Indies, it seems likely that one purpose of his petition was to deceive Spain about his real intentions. Another motive that probably animated him was his urgent need of money. This interpretation is borne out by his correspondence with Francisco Arrieta. In a letter dated May 12 Miranda informed Arrieta that unfortunately he had not received certain funds which had been remitted from Habana to pay the expense of his travel. Hence he besought his compatriot to send him two thousand pesos in order that he might reimburse those friends who had relieved his financial distress.³

Bernardo del Campo still sympathized with Miranda, for he invited him to dinner at the legation. Count Floridablanca soon warned Campo, however, that Miranda's chief aim was to upbraid or defame those persons against whom he held a grudge.⁴ There is no doubt that, at the instance of Floridablanca, Campo would have made a formal demand upon England for the fugitive colonel if her law and custom had held any promise of success.⁵ To aid Campo in his dealings with that officer, in May and July, 1785, Floridablanca transmitted tentative replies which were obviously intended to delude Miranda, for the Minister stated that he had been unable properly to consider his petition.⁶

In an epistle addressed to Arrieta on June 20, 1785, Miranda said that nothing new had occurred in his relations with

² Inclosures in Campo to Floridablanca, undated, *ibid.*

³ Mir. MSS., vol. 7. This letter signed "Pancho" and another addressed to Arrieta dated June 29, 1785 (see *infra*, p. 62) bearing the same alias are among the small number of letters that have come to hand which evince any interest by Miranda in his relatives in Caracas. Two letters from his brother-in-law, Marcos de Orea, dated July 17, 1775, and April 15, 1776, are preserved in Mir. MSS., vol. 21.

⁴ Campo to Miranda, May 25, 1785, *ibid.*, Floridablanca to Campo, May 26, 1785, A. G. S., estado, 8141.

⁵ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 255, note a.

⁶ Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, pp. 248-49.

Spain. He suggested that correspondence with himself might be secretly carried on through a party in San Sebastián. At this turn in his affairs Miranda renewed his acquaintance with John Turnbull, the prosperous English merchant whom he had met in Spain. Further, as a collection of visiting cards covering five folio pages in his contemporary memoranda shows, Miranda now met other interesting people. Among the persons who evidently called on him were the following: Count Andreani, Messrs. Barré, Bentham, and Fitzherbert, Major Jardine, Sir James Johnstone, and General Rainsford.⁷

According to the Spanish Minister, the recreant officer met Lords Howe and Sidney, Henry Pelton, M. P., and a former lord of the admiralty.⁸ In a letter to Floridablanca dated August 6, 1785, Campo declared that Miranda was becoming intimate with English military officers but that he was in a vacillating mood and that at times he seemed to desire restoration to royal favor. His humor and activities are suggested by the following passage from a letter: "At present philosophy, government, academies of science, sessions of Parliament, and the society of statesmen and of learned men occupy all of my time with much profit and to some extent mitigate the pain of stern adversity."⁹

Still, there is no doubt that to certain Englishmen the distracted Spanish subject aired his views about America. In the summer of 1785 the *Political Herald and Review* stated that the flames of revolution had spread from the United States into the Spanish Indies and that an aspiring champion of its freedom had reached England. Among his cherished papers Miranda later filed a copy of this flattering portrait:

"In London, we are well assured, there is at this moment a Spanish American of great consequence, and possessed of the confidence of his fellow-citizens, who aspires to the glory of being the deliverer of his country. He is a man of sublime

⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 7.

⁸ Campo to Floridablanca, undated. A. G. S., estado, 8141.

⁹ Miranda to Arrieta, June 29, 1785, Mir. MSS., vol. 7.

views and penetrating understanding, skilled in the antient and modern languages, conversant in books, and acquainted with the world. He has devoted many years to the study of general politics; the origin, the progress, and the termination of the different species of governments; the circumstances that combine and retain multitudes of mankind in political societies; and the causes by which these societies are dissolved and swallowed up by others. This gentleman, having visited every province in North America, came to England, which he regards as the mother country of liberty, and the school for political knowledge. As friends to freedom, we forbear to be more particular concerning this distinguished character. * * * We admire his talents, esteem his virtues, and heartily wish prosperity to the noblest pursuit that can occupy the powers of any mortal, that of bestowing the blessings of freedom on millions of his fellow-men." ¹⁰

A comprehensive interpretation of Miranda's attitude toward the Spanish Indies at this time is furnished by a memorandum that he composed seven years later. After mentioning the ambitious project that he had formed for Spanish-American liberation while in the United States, he added: "With this object I proceeded to England early in 1785, but the embarrassment and disgust that prevailed there because of the loss of the Thirteen Colonies and the heavy expenses of the Revolutionary War did not promise an opportunity for the presentation of a design of such magnitude. Accordingly I resolved to occupy myself temporarily by an attentive examination of various governments and political systems of Europe." ¹¹

In the English metropolis the Venezuelan renewed his acquaintance with the American, Colonel W. S. Smith, who on July 4, 1785, left a card at Miranda's lodgings declaring that he wished "to pay his respects to Col. de Miranda as a friend to the rights of mankind and the Happiness of Society." ¹²

¹⁰ *Political Herald and Review*, I, 29-30.

¹¹ "Para Gensoni en Paris," Oct. 10, 1792, *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 45.

¹² *Ibid.*, vol. 7.

Smith was now acting as secretary to his father-in-law, John Adams, United States minister to London. Miranda soon fixed his eyes upon that secretary as a congenial companion for a continental journey. His feelings were reciprocated; and on August 4, 1785, Colonel Smith asked Minister Adams for leave to make "a small tour on the Continent."¹³ The permission was soon granted; and on August 9, after Miranda had secured through Turnbull a letter of credit on Amsterdam and had placed his cherished papers in the custody of James Penman, an English merchant whom he had met in Charleston, he departed in Smith's company en route for Harwich. On August 10 the voyagers crossed the English Channel on a packet boat to Hellevoetsluis.¹⁴ Miranda carried with him a letter of introduction from Bernardo del Campo to Spain's Minister in Prussia. However, this epistle was offset by a cipher dispatch that Campo sent to the Spanish legation at Berlin. Further, Vergennes was incited to issue orders for the detention of the fugitive, if he should venture to cross the northern frontier of France.¹⁵

On August 22 the two friends arrived at Rotterdam. There they admired the statue of Erasmus and surveyed the yachts in the harbor. They also inspected the India House. After visiting points of interest at The Hague, Leyden, and Haarlem, they proceeded to Amsterdam. While in that city they viewed the theatre, the arsenal, and the stadthaus. To a friend Miranda wrote that Holland impressed him as a "singular and most curious country."¹⁶

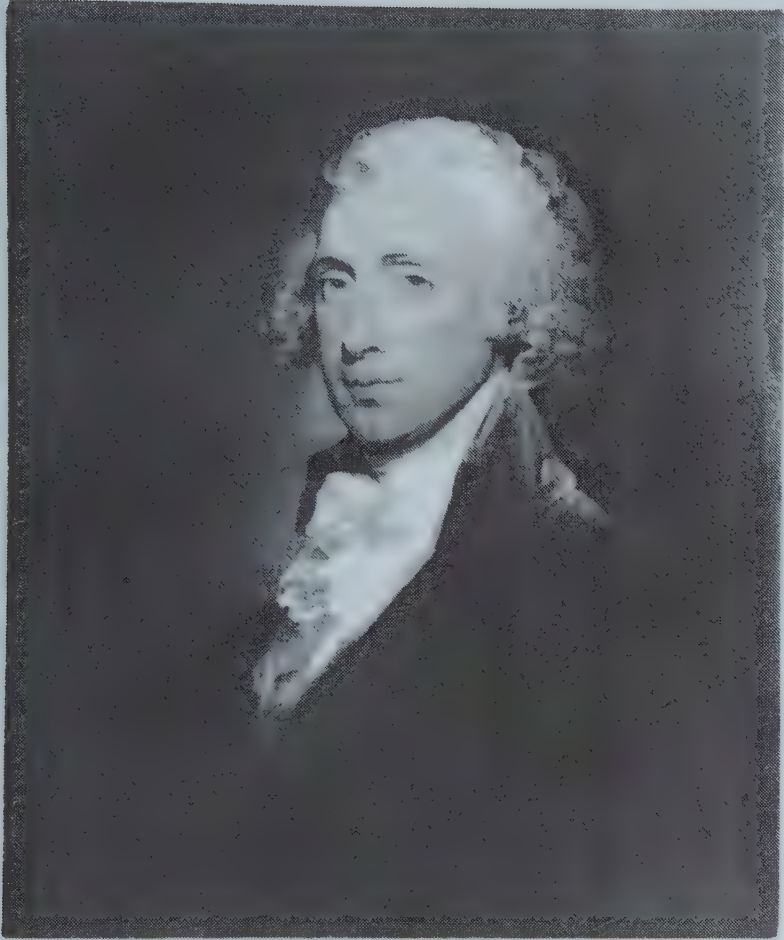
The tourists then journeyed to Prussia, the ambitious, militaristic country that Miranda had long desired to see. After visiting the site of the battle of Minden, on August 29 they reached Potsdam. On the next day they made a trip to the Palace of Sans Souci; in the King's apartments they saw "a

¹³ Adams MSS., 1784-1785, f. 174.

¹⁴ Turnbull to Miranda, Aug. 9, 1785, Mir. MSS., vol. 8.

¹⁵ Campo to Floridablanca, Aug. 18, 1785, A. G. S., estado, 8141; Hereida to Campo, Oct. 1, 1785, *ibid.*, 8157.

¹⁶ To J. Penman, Aug. 14, 1785, Mir. MSS., vol. 8.



*Colonel William S. Smith. Portrait by Gilbert Stuart.
Reproduced by courtesy of Mr. Herbert L. Pratt.*

reading desk upon which lay open" a volume on the art of war.¹⁷ At Berlin on September 3 they addressed letters to King Frederick William I to ask permission to attend a review of his soldiers which had attracted some distinguished visitors. This request was politely granted; and on September 5 the two colonels attended a military parade.¹⁸

Two days later they witnessed the "very elegant" maneuvers of Prussian gendarmes and hussars where, in Smith's words, every officer and soldier seemed "to understand his duty perfectly." Next they beheld four thousand men maneuvering "in a most masterly manner" under the command of General Möllendorf. While watching the evolutions on September 9 they met the Chevalier Duportail who was wearing the Cross of St. Louis and the Eagle of the Society of the Cincinnati. After attending a review in which the King commanding the infantry against the cavalry displayed "very great" military ability, the adventurous travelers visited an old, deformed, Jewish philosopher. In his journal Smith wrote that "Miranda soon took up his text and preached liberty and independence with as much zeal as ever the King of the Jews established his religious system—the Israelite contended and insisted that it was ideal and foolish."¹⁹

After visiting the Prussian military academy, on September 19 the Americans returned to Potsdam. On the wide margin of Smith's journal Miranda indignantly scrawled a note to the effect that certain English officers had stigmatized them as "rebels." On September 20 they dined by invitation in the royal palace. "The dinner," recorded Miranda in another marginal note, "was very ordinary, but the wines were good, and the pages and servants were richly dressed. A Swiss colonel," he continued, "gave me much information about the Prussian army." On the next day the two friends attended some military maneuvers in which the attack was directed by General Möllendorf and the defense was managed by Prince Frederick of Brunswick. While viewing those evolutions Mi-

¹⁷ Smith's Journal, *ibid.*¹⁸ Antepara, pp. 42-43.¹⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 8.

randa had a chat with Marquis Lafayette who apparently offered him his services in case he should visit Paris. "He asked me," said Miranda, "if I did not expect an uprising in South America, and declared that he would much like to promote its liberty. I responded with gravity that I knew nothing about that topic. Thus the conversation ended and we separated." As he much disliked the Marquis and even suspected him of ulterior motives, the dissembling South American thwarted Lafayette's attempt to sound his secret designs.²⁰

Soon afterwards the travelers left Prussia for Saxony. On October 2 they went to Maxen to view the battle field where in 1759 an engagement was fought between the Austrians and the Prussians. Two days later they surveyed the field where those rivals fought a battle in 1745. "Miranda," wrote Smith in his lively journal, "seems very fond to give every favorable impression relative to America—he is much attached to its happiness and dignity."²¹

Near Lobositz on the river Elbe the travelers reconnoitered the field where on October 1, 1756, an important battle was fought between the Austrians and the Prussians. From Luis de Onis, the Spanish chargé at Dresden, on October 3, 1785, Francisco de Miranda, who was described as a "lieutenant colonel in the service of His Catholic Majesty," secured a passport for a journey to Vienna.²² After mentioning a visit that he and Miranda made to the theatre, in an entry in his journal dated Prague, October 9, Smith revealed another side of his companion's character when he recorded that they "went to a brothel, but its appearance was so vulgar I retired—Miranda stayed."²³

In the imperial library of Vienna, Miranda and Smith gazed upon the first letter of the conquistador, Hernando Cortés, to Charles V. They soon visited the palace of Emperor Joseph II, viewed the university that had been constructed by Maria

²⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 8. Cf. Junius, *A Jean Skey Eustace*, p. 8, note.

²¹ Smith's Journal, Mir. MSS., vol. 8.

²² Passport signed by Luis de Onis, *ibid.* ²³ *Ibid.*



*Marquis de Lafayette, as a General of the Old Régime.
Lavachez mezzotint. Reproduced by courtesy of Good-
speed's Book Shop, Boston, Massachusetts.*

Theresa, and inspected the wonderful collection of armor in the arsenal. While attending a performance in the theatre they beheld the Emperor attired in green and red, the uniform of his regiment. In his name, on October 24, 1785, an Austrian official issued a passport to Miranda who was described as a Spanish cavalier en route to Constantinople.²⁴ A receipt dated two days later shows that to finance this trip Smith had advanced him two hundred and thirty pounds.²⁵ At Vienna, on October 26, the friends parted company: the American to proceed to London via Paris; and the Venezuelan to journey to Constantinople. In his pocket Smith carried a letter from Miranda to Campo which stated that he intended to travel in Hungary.²⁶

On his trip through that country Miranda paid a visit to the musician, Joseph Haydn, who was serving as *capellmeister* to Prince Nicolaus of Esterházy. Haydn showed the traveler the garden and the picture gallery of the wonderful Esterházy palace. Miranda beheld the famous master directing an orchestra in the Marionette Theatre. After conversing about great musicians with the Austrian composer,—at least so he declared in his diary, which took up the narrative at this point,—Miranda made a tour of Austria-Hungary. As he learned at Trieste that there was no vessel which would soon leave this port for Smyrna and Constantinople, he resolved to visit Greece and Italy.

Upon disembarking at Venice on November 12 Miranda was much impressed with its unique and fascinating site. "So many handsome and haughty buildings that seemed to rise out of the water," he wrote, "the charming canals, with the adjacent islands,—all "formed a great and most beautiful picture." ²⁷ Yet even before he reached an inn near the Bridge of

²⁴ Smith's Journal, *ibid.*, passport signed by B. Collenbach, *ibid.* ²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Miranda to Campo, Oct. 25, 1785, A. G. S., estado, 8157. On Smith's impressions of this trip see further, Roof, *Colonel William Smith and Lady*, pp. 117-25.

²⁷ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 8. The term *Diario* is henceforth used in the footnotes of this work to refer to the diary or to diarial jottings that Miranda later intercalated among his manuscripts.

Rialto, some of his vivid impressions had faded away. Among other sights he visited the ducal palace and beheld the Senate in session. In the proceedings of the Doge and his Council Miranda thought that he discerned a "disguised despotism." On November 19, evidently by request, a Venetian acquaintance named Arteaga brought him "a list of the Spanish-American ex-Jesuits whose names he could recollect that were then residing at Bologna."²⁸

Soon afterwards Miranda embarked in a gondola bound for Verona. After visiting that city he proceeded to Bologna, via Mantua, Parma, and Modena. In his diary he noted that in the Spanish College of the University of Bologna he saw "portraits of bishops, inquisitors, and other barbarians belonging to the nation that had distinguished herself by her fanaticism," which was doubtless an allusion to Spain.²⁹ Upon reaching Florence, he promptly proceeded to the Pitti Palace where he was dazzled by the pictures of Italian masters. Among his favorite paintings were Raphael's "St. John," Titian's "Venus," and Del Sarto's "Endymion." Much did he admire the series of portraits of eminent artists. After viewing the library of the Medici family, he took the road leading to Pisa.

Francisco de Miranda reached Rome on January 25, 1786. As he had some books in his luggage, he had to obtain the permission of a familiar of the Inquisition before he could pass through the city gate. In his diary under date of January 29 he thus inscribed his impressions of the celebrated Basilica of St. John Lateran: "The interior is so crowded with columns, statues, gilded figures, paintings, stuccoes, and chapels that one finds confusion without either enjoyment or design, although there are many pieces which are in every particular excellent! This is a defect that exists more or less in all the churches of Rome, not even excepting the Basilica of St. Peter."³⁰

²⁸ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*; *Boletín de la academia nacional de la historia*, XI, 248.

On the next day he went to the church of San Pietro in Vincoli where he much admired the majestic statue of Moses by Michelangelo. The diarist's opinion was that of all the buildings of the city the most admirable impression was produced by the Colosseum. He attended divine service in the Sistine Chapel in order that he might see the bishops, the cardinals, and the Pope celebrate mass. He climbed the historic mount "where Romulus laid the first foundations of Rome."⁸¹ Unlike that other famous son of Caracas, Simón Bolívar, who visited the Aventine Mount twenty years later, Miranda did not find there an inspiration to dedicate his life to the Herculean task of South American emancipation.

Though his invaluable journal left unmentioned a topic that lay very near his heart, yet documents which Miranda secretly filed among papers concerning his European travels prove that he had not relinquished the plan of liberating his native land. On the eve of his departure from the Eternal City he secured a roll of those ex-Jesuits residing in Italy who in 1767 had been expelled from the Spanish Indies. At the end of the list was inscribed the name of an embittered Peruvian exile called Viscardo whose fate was to be strangely interlinked with Miranda's.⁸²

Under date of February 24, 1786, Miranda wrote in his diary that, having seen both ancient and modern Rome, he had decided to travel south. Among points of interest that he soon visited were Capua, Virgil's tomb, the Bay of Naples, and the ruins of Pompeii. On March 20 he sailed from Barletta for Ragusa, the city-republic. During the second week in June he ruminated upon the tribulations of Greece under Turkish rule. At Corinth he admired Grecian scenery from an eminence upon which the Moslem castle was placed. He amazed its com-

⁸¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 8; *Boletín de la academia nacional de la historia*, XI, 254.

⁸² "Listas de los Jesuitas Americanos que actualmente residen en Italia expulsos de su Patria, año de 1786," Mir. MSS., vol. 45; Viscardo y Guzmán, *Lettre aux Espagnols-Américains*, pp. 15-19, note. Of the origin of this list Miranda wrote after the title given above: "me dio esta Lista el ex-Jesuita D. Thomas Belon, extractado de los Libros principales, estando en Roma en dho año."

mandant with tales of his travels. On June 17 he disembarked at Piraeus, and then rode on horseback past ancient sepulchers and city walls to Athens. In his journal Miranda wrote that he had to bribe the Turkish commandant to secure permission to view the Acropolis. Among other scenes of interest he visited the Parthenon, the Arch of Adrian, and the ruins of the temples of Augustus and Jupiter. Entries in his diary indicate that before sailing from Athens for Smyrna he also surveyed the tombs of Cimon and Themistocles and enjoyed the exquisite flavor of the honey of Mount Hymettus. He did not omit to make a pilgrimage to the historic plains of Marathon.³³

Miranda later asserted that, after viewing the Grecian Archipelago, he also visited Egypt.³⁴ While his vessel sailed past Asia Minor, with a telescope in hand,—so runs his journal,—the voyager sought in vain to catch a glimpse of the ruins that were Troy. On July 30 he came in sight of the Golden Horn. His first view of Constantinople incited him to compose the following passage in his diary: "Impressive were the beauty and spaciousness of the harbor, the multitude of gondolas constantly plying from one part to another of Europe or Asia, and the gardens and seraglio of the Sultan as well as his kiosks which were located along the margin of the sea. Yet all this magnificence vanished and a singular contrast was furnished when we entered the streets of the city."³⁵

An embarrassing personal encounter between Spain's Minister at Constantinople and Miranda was later used by the Spanish Government to deride him.³⁶ In typical Spanish fashion he facilitated his visit to the famous Turkish mosque by slipping six piasters into an attendant's palm. "There is no deny-

³³ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vols. 8, 9.

³⁴ Miranda to Floridablanca, July 25, 1789, *ibid.*, vol. 18. In the rough draft a phrase that follows a mention of Miranda's sojourn in Italy runs thus: "Pasé luego por Brindez a Ragusa, al continente de la Antigua Grecia, al Peloponneso, sus Islas, Archipelago, al Egipto, Asia-menor, y hasta Constinopla." See also, Miranda, *Diary*, p. 169, note 651; and Rojas, *Miranda dans la révolution française*, p. 172.

³⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 9.

³⁶ Miranda to Floridablanca, July 25, 1789, *ibid.*, vol. 18.

ing," said Miranda communing with his journal, "that St. Sophia is a daring architectural design."³⁷ With characteristic audacity, he tried to penetrate into the interior of the Sultan's palace but was soon halted by Janizaries. Desirous to behold some Circassian maidens, he lingered near the entrance of the slave market only to learn to his deep chagrin that a *giaour* might not even catch a glimpse of their beauty. He peeped into an opium joint. He also inspected certain plans of the Crimea. In his diary he inscribed some severe strictures on Turkish artillery practice. Early in September he crossed the Hellespont to Scutari. Among the scenes on the shores of Asia Minor that he particularly enjoyed was the beautiful view afforded from the Tower of Leander.³⁸

Equipped with a passport from the Austrian Minister at Constantinople dated September 22, "Count Miranda," as he was now styled, embarked on a vessel bound for Russia.³⁹ On being released from quarantine on the Dneiper River, he proceeded to Kherson. There he paid a visit to the mansion that was destined for the conqueror of the Crimean Peninsula, Gregory Potemkin, who had become Prince of Tauris. When that one-eyed Prince arrived at Kherson, wrote Miranda, all the citizens paid court to the favorite idol. On December 31, 1786, according to Miranda's diary, he was escorted to Potemkin's residence where he met the honorary favorite of Empress Catherine II. Potemkin, who was the chief minister and military commander of Russia, asked Miranda about the Spanish Indies. So strong a fancy did the Russian Cyclops take to Miranda that he invited him to visit the Crimea. The Prince was adorning that peninsula in preparation for a visit by his august mistress, Catherine II, who was making a triumphal tour of the southern part of her empire. Miranda recorded in his journal that in January, 1787, in the favorite's company, he traversed the Russian steppes and inspected Inkerman and Sebastopol.⁴⁰

³⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 9. ³⁸ *Ibid.* ³⁹ Passport signed by D'Herbert Rathkeal, *ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 10; Antepara, p. 245.

Prince Potemkin evidently told him that it would be unpardonable if he did not aim to meet Catherine II. Hence the impecunious traveler secured a suit of blue cloth, girded on a sword, and proceeded to Kieff. There he soon met various diplomats who were in the imperial train. Among them were the nominal Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Bezborodko; the Austrian Minister, Count Cobentzel; the English Ambassador, Alleyne Fitzherbert; and the French Minister, Count Ségur. He was presented to the reigning favorite of the moment, Count Alexander Mamonov, who received him kindly. Miranda visited a chapel in order that he might see the Czarina attend a mass celebrated according to Greek rites.

A most remarkable monarch of a remarkable age, the Great Catherine was at this time fifty-eight years of age. Though foreign visitors to her domains declared that the Empress was short and fat, yet they praised her commanding presence and her handsome face which was admirably framed in white hair. On or about February 25, 1787 (new style), Miranda was presented to Catherine II who graciously offered him her hand to kiss. In his diary he wrote that the Czarina soon entered into conversation with him, and that, after he had dined at her table, she asked him about the Spanish Indies. Among the questions that Miranda made note of was the query "if it were possible that the Inquisition still existed there?"⁴¹

He soon met her again at court functions. During a dinner at the lodgings of Countess Branicki the Empress inquired about his travels. Miranda recorded in his diary that when a rumor reached her that he contemplated making the long trip to Moscow, Prince Potemkin informed him that Her Majesty would not permit him to depart from Kieff at that season, for the passage of rivers was considered perilous. The diarist avowed that "this act of her good heart" had made "such an impression of tenderness and gratitude" on him that

⁴¹ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 10; Grisanti, pp. 15-16. See further, Ségur, *Mémoires, souvenirs et anecdotes*, II, 17, 18.



*Empress Catherine II. Portrait by an unknown artist.
Lithograph by A. Grevedore. In the collection of the
British Museum, London.*

he "would never forget it!" ⁴²

At a reception Miranda evidently became engaged in another conversation with the Czarina, for he wrote thus in his diary: "Her Majesty asked me various questions about Spanish America. In particular she inquired about the Jesuits and the aborigines, and told me that, alleging that it was a state secret, the Spanish court had refused to furnish this information for a dictionary of languages which she wished to publish." Apparently the Empress also questioned Miranda about the antiquities of Greece and Italy. "From this," said he, "we proceeded to discuss the condition of the arts in Spain, the celebrated paintings in Spanish palaces, the *autos-de-fé*, and the antiquities of Granada." Miranda took note that Catherine wished to learn whether or not the Prince of Asturias was a youth of promise. "At last she mentioned our expedition under O'Reilly against Algiers and asked if it were not true that much less than one-half of the attacking party had escaped. I responded that this was an exaggeration, for I believed that we had lost only one-fifth of our soldiers." Miranda's private estimate of Catherine II was preserved in his diarial entry that this extensive conversation displayed to him "her goodness of heart, humanity, intelligence, and noble sentiments." ⁴³

The imperial entourage evidently felt that he was rapidly winning his way into the good graces of the temperamental Empress. In his diary the egotistic creole noted that Count Ségur considered his reception flattering and styled him "the great courtier." Miranda further noticed that when at a subsequent conversation with Catherine II he stated that Robertson's *History of America* was prohibited from circulating in the Spanish dominions, she exclaimed that for such an insult the entire Spanish Academy ought to be consigned to the Inquisition! ⁴⁴

Through the good offices of Prince Potemkin, Miranda was

⁴² Mir. MSS., vol. 10.

⁴³ *Ibid.*; Grisanti, p. 19.

⁴⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 10.

given an opportunity to meet the puppet-King of Poland who was journeying near the frontier.⁴⁵ Hence in the company of a Russian general the South American took a coach for Canoff. There he was presented to Catherine's quondam favorite, King Stanislaus II; at a dinner, he tells us, his companion was seated at the King's right hand, while he was placed at his left. Miranda also recorded in his diary that the handsome, royal protégé of Catherine II questioned him about Spain and the Indies. While other members of the party were playing whist, the King pursued his quest and asked "if there had actually been uprisings in South America."⁴⁶

Shortly after Miranda returned to Kieff he became aware that Catherine II regarded him with no small favor. Her chamberlain suggested to him that he ought never to return to the Spanish dominions but should instead reside in Russia. After mentioning a game of whist played while he was at the quarters of Count Branicki, Miranda's journal runs thus:

"When the game was over Mamonov beckoned me aside and said that the Czarina had instructed him to tell me that I should remain with them, for she feared that the people in my country would not treat me well. I responded that certainly there was no one who loved the Empress more than I did, nor was there anyone more appreciative of her royal kindness, but that my situation was such that a step of this nature was almost impossible. At last I said that I would tell him of these circumstances confidentially so that he could inform Her Majesty. Thus she might do whatever should appear to her to be just."⁴⁷

Prince Potemkin apparently informed Miranda that, when the Empress heard that he might fall a victim to the Inquisition if he returned to his native land, she "talked about his person with the tenderness of a mother." Although the design concerning Spanish America that Miranda now cherished evi-

⁴⁵ Normandes to Floridablanca, April 5, 1787, A. H. N., estado, legajo 6120.

⁴⁶ Mir. MSS., vol. 10.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*; Grisanti, p. 21.

dently caused him to decline an enticing offer to enter the Russian service, yet Count Mamonov informed him that his royal Mistress would give him "her imperial protection in all parts of the world." Miranda then suggested that "to promote the execution of his enterprise a letter of credit amounting to ten thousand roubles would be very acceptable for use in case of need."⁴⁸ It would seem that he audaciously broached his revolutionary ideas to the Czarina. In an article which he helped to prepare for the press many years later the statement was made that he disclosed his views concerning his native land to Catherine II who "manifested the strongest interest in the accomplishment of his scheme, and assured him, in case of his success, she would be the foremost to support the independence of South America."⁴⁹

Normandes, the Spanish minister to Russia, wrote to Madrid and declared that Miranda was in higher favor with Potemkin and the Empress than any other foreigner at the Russian court.⁵⁰ Miranda then traveled several hundred versts across bleak steppes to the old Russian capital. At first sight, because of "the mixture of palaces, gardens, and hovels," he compared Moscow to Constantinople. He soon visited the arsenal where he beheld with interest the muskets, swords, scimitars, and oriental trappings that had been used by Muscovite soldiers; he also viewed the military academy and the military hospital. A new imperial palace which was being constructed attracted his attention. In the cathedral he was not only shown the miters adorned with pearls and diamonds, and a colossal icon of the Virgin Mary, but also the sacred relics. In the grand palace he much admired a picture of the battle of Pultowa. Admitted to view the Muscovite archives, he wrote in his diary that this repository contained six thousand volumes of inedited documents concerning Russian history. On June 19 Miranda left Moscow bound for St. Petersburg via

⁴⁸ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 10; Grisanti, p. 25.

⁴⁹ *Ed. Rev.*, XIII, 287.

⁵⁰ Normandes to Floridablanca, June, 1787, A. H. N., estado, 6120.

Novgorod; six days later he reached the capital on the banks of the Neva.⁵¹

He sojourned about three months at St. Petersburg. Through letters of introduction he became acquainted with many persons of distinction. He stated in his journal that in the library of the Academy of Science he was permitted to examine Catherine's draft of a code of laws for Russia. After viewing the defenses of Kronstadt, he wrote with enthusiasm in his diary: "Here is where the colossal statue of Peter I should be erected." He soon was drawn into a series of dinners and receptions in the capital city that perhaps surpassed any which he had yet enjoyed. Among the imperial residences that he inspected were the pleasant Palace of Tzarskoïe-Sielo, the so-called Hermitage, and the magnificent Winter Palace. In the meantime the Czarina had returned to the capital where Miranda apparently had an audience with her.⁵² There is no doubt that the Spanish legation at St. Petersburg was disturbed because of Miranda's advent. As early as March 28, 1786, Campo had sent a cipher dispatch to the Spanish Minister in Russia advising him circumspectly to observe the actions of Miranda if he arrived there and instructing him that, if he learned that this "partisan of independence" intended to visit France, he should at once secretly inform the Court of Madrid and the Spanish Minister at Paris.⁵³

This warning may have unduly stimulated the vigilance of Spain's agents. In any case, a difficulty soon arose between Count Miranda and Pedro Macanaz, the Spanish chargé d'affaires. Perhaps it was under the influence of the French Minister that, in July, 1787, Macanaz wrote a curt note to Miranda to ask whether he had the right to use the title "Count" or to wear the Spanish uniform. In reply the so-called Count,

⁵¹ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 10. An itinerary of Miranda's journey in Russia is found in Grisanti, pp. 66-73.

⁵² *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 10. Though words put into Miranda's mouth concerning the Czarina by Viarz, *L'aide de camp ou l'auteur inconnu*, p. 124, may not incorrectly suggest his sentiments, yet South American historians maintain that this romantic sketch is apocryphal. See Posada, *Apostillas á la historia colombiana*, pp. 44-45.

⁵³ A. G. S., estado, 8156.

who felt sure of protection from the Russian court, haughtily declared that if the inquiry had been made in a decent manner he would not have lacked the means to satisfy vanity or incredulity. Further, Miranda intimated that Macanaz's inquiry had been made in a despicable manner and that he would not deign to justify himself.⁵⁴ To quote from his journal again:

"Count Bezborodko invited me to his house on the following Saturday. He told me that the *chargé d'affaires* of Spain had called to complain of a letter which I had written and to ask for my person. The *chargé* declared that I had left the Spanish service and stated that the Spaniards considered me as a person who was most dangerous to their empire. Bezborodko replied that Russia had no cartel with Spain and that the request was not justified. Then Macanaz responded that he considered the Spanish Empire imperilled, that Spain and Russia were good friends, and that Russia should condescend to grant his demand. Bezborodko referred this message to the Empress who evidently replied that if the Spanish Empire were in peril there was no region where I might better sojourn than in Russia, for this country was at a great distance from Spain. Further, that the esteem in which Catherine II held me was not because of my rank in the Spanish service but because of personal qualities well known to Her Majesty through which I had gained her protection."⁵⁵

In his diary Miranda even alleged that on a certain occasion when Catherine was on her way to mass she secretly whispered to him that she would protect him from Spanish intrigue.⁵⁶ Early in August he recorded that Macanaz had repeated the request that he should be delivered up to the Spaniards, but that Bezborodko had given the same reply which he had given in July, namely, "that Her Majesty had accorded me her protection, and that the esteem in which she held me was personal and not because of my rank or titles. Further, he said to me that this very morning the Czarina had ordered

⁵⁴ Antepara, pp. 247-48.

⁵⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 11; Grisanti, pp. 27-28.

⁵⁶ Mir. MSS., vol. 11.

that I should be given very emphatic letters with strong recommendations for all her ministers in foreign countries which would justify me and require them to aid me in her name, that if I needed anything more I should let her know, that if I returned to Russia I would be very well received, and that if I thought of residing there she would with much pleasure give me an advantageous position.”⁵⁷

In a flattering letter to the fugitive colonel, Count Bezborodko now informed him that, convinced of “your zeal for her service and disposed to receive you whenever you find it convenient, Her Imperial Majesty permits you to wear the uniform of her armies.”⁵⁸ Miranda was now furnished with a circular letter to the Russian ministers at Vienna, Paris, London, The Hague, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Berlin, and Naples that directed them, in case of need to furnish the bearer with imperial aid and protection. He was also intrusted with a secret letter from Count Bezborodko to the Russian ministers at Berlin, Naples, and Vienna that reads as follows:

“Count de Miranda, a colonel in the service of His Catholic Majesty, having arrived at Kieff during the sojourn that the Empress made there, has had the honor of being presented to Her Imperial Majesty and of pleasing her by his merits and distinguished qualities. Among other things he has gained the favor of our August Sovereign by the knowledge that he has acquired through his travels in different quarters of the globe. Her Imperial Majesty, wishing to give M. de Miranda a signal proof of her esteem and of the special interest that she takes in him, instructs you, Sir, whenever the present letter reaches your hands, to receive this officer in a manner worthy of the reception which she has given him, to show him every care and attention, and to grant him your assistance and protection whenever he needs or wishes them. Lastly, in case of necessity you are to offer him your legation as an asylum. In recommending this colonel to you in so distinguished a fashion the Empress has wished to show you to what extent she likes the merit which she has found in him and to indicate that an

⁵⁷ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. II.

⁵⁸ Antepara, p. 42.

inextinguishable claim of one who aspires to her bounty and protection is that of possessing as much merit as Count de Miranda.”⁵⁹

After the Spanish Minister Normandes arrived at St. Petersburg the intrigues against the “criminal of state” seemed to decline. In a dispatch dated August 9, 1787, Count Cobentzel reported to Vienna that Miranda was living on a footing of agreeable intimacy with foreign diplomats as well as with the Russian court. “He is a man with a haughty disposition and vast knowledge,” said Cobentzel, “who speaks very freely about everything but particularly denounces the Inquisition, the government of Spain, the King, and the Prince of Asturias. He makes many offensive allusions to Spanish ignorance.”⁶⁰

At this juncture Count Bezborodko emphatically warned Miranda to beware of the Spaniards, and sent him a letter of credit on the Czarina’s English banker for two thousand ducats.⁶¹ The beneficiary made note that he had asked for ten thousand roubles, and that when he complained and declared that he needed in all two thousand pounds, the Count assured him that he would be given as much gold as he desired.⁶² Further, he was apparently granted the right to wear the uniform of colonel in a regiment commanded by Prince Potemkin. On the eve of his departure from the capital Miranda addressed a politic letter to the Czarina; he thanked her for the many kindnesses that she had accorded him, and declared that he was deeply attached to her: “Nothing but a great and interesting object like that which actually occupies me could induce me to postpone the agreeable and sweet pleasure of acquitting myself through service of the debt that I owe to your benevolence, and of partaking with your subjects the previous

⁵⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 11; Antepara, pp. 41-42. Although the secret letter was dated Kieff, April 22, 1787, it was evidently delivered in St. Petersburg on or about August 8, 1787 (old style); see further Grisanti, p. 90, note.

⁶⁰ Parra-Pérez, *Miranda et la révolution française*, p. xxix.

⁶¹ Miranda to A. H. Sutherland, Aug. 10, 1787 (old style), Mir. MSS., vol. 11; Grisanti, p. 92.

⁶² *Diario*, Aug. 8, and Aug. 10, 1787 (old style), Mir. MSS., vol. 11.

and inestimable advantages which society enjoys under your illustrious and glorious rule. * * * The additional letter of credit that you have kindly wished to grant me will be judiciously used in case of need.”⁶³

Three days later Miranda formally acknowledged the receipt from the Russian Government of letters of credit that amounted to two thousand pounds.⁶⁴ The dilemma that had confronted the imperial ministers was aptly described by Count Ségur: “They dare not speak against the traveler to the Empress who protects him, and who persists in the belief that he is innocent and oppressed.”⁶⁵ In his memoirs that Minister thus expressed his opinion of Miranda: “He is a well-informed man, ingenious, intriguing, and audacious.”⁶⁶ Though the errant Venezuelan won the favor of the modern Messalina, yet no evidence has been found to prove that he became one of those notorious favorites whom she showered with princely gifts. Neither does he describe her as a disgusting old woman. On the other hand, Bezborodko later wrote to Potemkin that with regard to Miranda, it was only a matter of money: “Your Excellency must remember that he demanded 10,000 roubles but that we granted him 1,000 roubles in gold.”⁶⁷

Other viewpoints upon the sojourn of Miranda at the Russian court are furnished by the following extracts from a letter written from St. Petersburg by his intimate friend, the learned Dr. Guthrie, a British surgeon in the Russian service, to Dr. Duncan of Edinburgh:

“Permit me to introduce to your acquaintance a most liberal and enlightened Traveler from a part of the Globe where you would least expect, a Mexican nobleman who in spite of every gothick barrier to knowledge which the Holly tribunal can invent has found secret means to come at it and now travels for additional instruction. Altho it is difficult to discover in

⁶³ Grisanti, pp. 92-93.

⁶⁴ Miranda to Bezborodko, Aug. 18, 1787 (old style), Mir. MSS., vol. 11.

⁶⁵ Parra-Pérez, p. xxxiii. ⁶⁶ Ségur, II, 17.

⁶⁷ *Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago Istoricheskago Obschestvo*, XXVI, 286.

what branch of ancient or modern learning he is deficient, Count Miranda intends finishing with Edinburgh a tour of Europe, North and South America with a part of Africa and I believe few men have made it to better purpose * * *

"He came into the Empire by the way of Cherson from Constantinople and after surveying the Crimea with Prince Potemkin our first Minister joined our Empress on her famous journey. This discerning lady soon distinguished the Count from the large group of foreign nobility which the pleasure of seeing her had drawn to Kiow and the marked distinctions she paid him does equal honor to both—I am only sorry that all the attention of the North cannot engage him to stay with us * * * I think the state of the Count more critical as learning has raised him above that mean and dark policy which has so long hid the finest part of the New from the penetrating Eyes of the Old World insomuch that he answers the Historian, the philosopher or naturalist all such questions as can throw light on their respective researches—this has struck even crowned heads in the same point of view, for our Great Lady has been joking with him about the flames of the inquisition and even invited him to stay in Russia, an honor she seldom confers on any officer however distinguished.

"The King of Poland had the same idea of making his acquaintance on the late journey and made him similar offers, in short it appears that all lovers and protectors of letters take an interest in the first thoroughly instructed South American who has appeared in Europe. * * * I beg you to present him to your learned friends and procure him an opportunity of hearing the medical and other societies assembled so as to enable him to judge of the progress of the swarm of bright students who are constantly to be found in Edinburgh ever since the university and other chairs have been filled with illustrious teachers—these are the treats he is in search of—not the pagentry of courts and distinctions of ranks which he has avoided as much as decency would permit for the pursuit of his grand object for which he appears to have an insatiable thirst." ⁶⁸

Upon his arrival at the Swedish capital Miranda decided

⁶⁸ Dated Sept. 5, 1787, Mir. MSS., vol. 21.

to remain incognito. There is no doubt that he was hospitably received by the Russian Minister, Count Razoumowsky.⁶⁹ On October 12, 1787, the Spanish Minister at Stockholm addressed a dispatch to Floridablanca to state that their quarry was in that city, and that he was lodging at the Russian legation under an assumed name.⁷⁰ While in Sweden the South American engaged a servant named Andrew Fröberg who served him faithfully for several years. In view of allegations which have been made that Miranda eventually joined the Masonic Order, it should be noticed that among other places of interest in Sweden he inspected a foundling hospital that was supported by the Masons. During a visit to Drottningholm Palace, Miranda saw the King dining in public with his family in the company of foreign ambassadors. Miranda's incognito was pierced by a Swedish diplomat named Baron Cederstrom whom he had met in Russia. This Baron secretly presented him to King Gustavus III, who was piqued with curiosity, and who conversed with him about his European travels. "His Majesty," wrote Miranda in his diary, "said that a person like myself who had been so well received by Empress Catherine could not be less well received by him."⁷¹ Wrapped in a piece of paper that bears a fair lady's name there may also be found among Miranda's manuscripts a lock of hair that once adorned his Swedish inamorata.

It was doubtless by request that the Swedish Minister at St. Petersburg made a report to his government concerning the tourist. His verdict was that Miranda was "a man of rare genius, full of information, with much force and eloquence, but imprudent and violent in disposition, and with a surprising rudeness of manner which he displays on all occasions."⁷² At Stockholm on October 31, 1787, a Swedish official signed a passport for "Herr Ofrersten de Miranda."⁷³ He soon

⁶⁹ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 12.

⁷⁰ Corrae i Aguirre to Floridablanca, Oct. 26, 1787, A. G. S., estado, 6717.

⁷¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 12; Cederstrom to Miranda, Oct. 15, 1787, *ibid.*

⁷² Parra-Pérez, p. xxxix.

⁷³ Passport signed by Carl Sparre, Mir. MSS., vol. 12.

crossed the frontier into Norway, and reached Christiania on November 10. In the company of a Mr. Anker, he visited its fortress and its Masonic temple. He stated in his journal that a fine Norwegian regiment which he inspected in its barracks was not well disciplined. With a passport secured from an official of the Kingdom of Denmark and Norway, on November 17 Miranda left Christiania. At Gothenburg he viewed a warehouse of a company that traded with the Indies. In Marstrand he visited a temple of the Masonic Order as well as the fortifications.⁷⁴

A paragraph in his diary mentions the fact that Miranda reached Denmark in time to spend Christmas Day in Copenhagen. In that city he lodged with the Russian Minister, Baron Krüdener. Though the agents of Spain had apparently lost sight of him, yet he caught a glimpse of her envoy at the Danish court. After a round of sight-seeing he was startled one morning to read in a Dutch gazette the following news from Stockholm: "We learn that the Spanish Minister at this court has received by the last mail an order from Madrid to demand a certain Count Miranda,—a Spaniard by birth, but actually in the imperial service of Russia,—who came here some time ago from St. Petersburg, and to send him a prisoner to Spain because he has been unfaithful to his King and is even suspected of high treason. The said Count Miranda left here some time ago bound for Denmark." Whereupon the pseudo-count promptly wrote to Count Bezborodko and declared that such menaces would not cause him to relinquish his travels which were mainly intended to remove certain absurd prejudices resulting from his defective education.⁷⁵ From Stockholm the Russian Minister wrote to Miranda to warn him that Spain's minions were anxious to lay hands on him and to suggest that he should sojourn only where there was a Russian legation.⁷⁶ Under date of January 28, 1788, Miranda

⁷⁴ Passport signed by J. E. Scheel, Nov. 12, 1787, *ibid.*; *Diario*, *ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 12; Miranda to Bezborodko, Jan. 26, 1788, *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Feb. 5, 1788, *ibid.*

entered the following confession in his diary:

"I am reading Vattel's *Droit des Gens* to determine whether or not I have deluded myself in regard to my conduct. I have always wished to regulate it by natural law, which is justice and reason. In truth I do not know what motive impels Spain in her attempt to injure me in the modes that she has attempted. Neither do I know in which essentials I have fallen short. To look for them is to seek for that which it is impossible to find. Nevertheless I have seen with pleasure and consolation my rights defended with the rights of other men by such an able author." ⁷⁷

To certain Danes the suspect actually dropped hints of his secret. He borrowed from an acquaintance in Copenhagen some inedited manuscripts concerning the Spanish Indies. From these papers Miranda made copies of documents that dealt with recent rebellions against Spanish rule in Peru and New Granada.⁷⁸ Count Bernstorff, Danish minister of foreign affairs, declared that Miranda was enthusiastic about the principles of liberty that had just triumphed in the English colonies of North America. The Minister of Finances, Count Schimmelmänn, who frequently entertained Miranda at his home, said that "the chief themes of his conversation were always vengeance on Spain and the overthrow of her rule in America." ⁷⁹

In the end of February the South American left Copenhagen bearing letters of introduction from Bernstorff which showed that he was now masquerading under the name of M. de Meran. A most interesting portion of his journal deals with his sojourn at Schleswig where he arrived on March 22, 1788. At once he sent a letter of introduction from Count Bernstorff to Prince Charles of Hesse, who was a marshal in the Danish service. In consequence he soon dined by invitation at the Prince's table, became acquainted with his family, and was politely escorted through his palace. He admired the portraits of Swedish monarchs and Danish dignitaries that adorned

⁷⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 12.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Parra-Pérez, p. xliv.

its walls. In the evening he returned to the palace where a card party was in progress. As the Prince of Hesse was not engaged in the game, he started a conversation with Miranda about the Spanish Indies, during which the latter must have mentioned his secret aspirations.

"He asked me," Miranda mentioned with purposeful vagueness in his diary, "if I wished to know my horoscope and predicted that it would be fulfilled within eight or ten years without fail. I told him that he was certainly mistaken, for I desired only a hut in which I might pass the rest of my life." The Prince evidently repeated his prediction on the next day as another diarial passage indicates: "He said that England ought to undertake such an enterprise, that certainly there could be no cause more just, and that he would like with all his heart to embrace it. Though some of his reasons appeared plausible, I repeated my former statement regarding myself."⁸⁰

These cautious allusions to the prognostication of the Prince of Hesse are to be interpreted in the light of a letter that Miranda sent from Hamburg to thank him for his kind attentions. "If the favorable prediction which the generous heart of Your Highness has made in respect to unhappy Colombia should ever be fulfilled, I shall not fail to send you the news."⁸¹ To this the Prince responded that he did not consider his prophecy as uncertain. "You will fulfill it some day, my dear Count, and that day is perhaps not very far distant:—It will indeed be glorious for you and happy for many unfortunate people and their posterity."⁸² Thus there is no reason to doubt that to the Prince of Hesse the conspirator had confided his ambitious design for the emancipation of the Spanish Indies, —a domain which henceforth he often designated as Colombia.

Miranda spent about three weeks in Hamburg. He then journeyed by way of Rothenburg, Bremen, and Groningen to Amsterdam. There he not only viewed Rembrandt's paintings in the city hall but also beheld some Spanish instruments of

⁸⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 13.

⁸¹ April 11, 1788, *ibid.*

⁸² April 13, 1788, *ibid.*

torture. About this time he received a friendly letter from Stephen Sayre who during a visit to Spain had seen Cagigal held as a prisoner. The American warned Miranda that the Spanish Government intended to wreak vengeance upon him.⁸³ After spending a few days at Utrecht and The Hague he proceeded to Rotterdam. On June 12, 1788, bearing a passport made out by the Russian Minister to the Low Countries for "Mr. de Meroud, a Livonian gentleman," Miranda left Holland bound for Switzerland.⁸⁴ Entries in his diary record that he viewed successively the castle of Liège, the Vauban fortress at Landau, the fortifications at Mannheim, and an artillery review at Strassburg.⁸⁵

His zest for new scenes must have been heightened when he entered the Swiss Republic. After visiting Basel Miranda proceeded up the Rhine Valley; its rocks, cascades, and magnificent evergreens filled him with admiration. A highway near the Piedmont frontier reminded him of the picturesque road between his native city and La Guaira. In a diarial entry dated September 1 he asserted that he had viewed the very spot where the Swiss patriot, William Tell, shot the tyrannical Gessler. He next made a pilgrimage to the secluded valley where, according to tradition, the Confederation of the Swiss cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden was formed. In his diary he also stated that he had secured a copy of the Act of Confederation of Switzerland. Lastly, he surveyed the field where the freemen of the primitive Republic had been wont to assemble.⁸⁶

Early in September, 1788, Miranda reached Zurich. Through a letter of introduction he became acquainted with Johann K. Lavater, a divine and poet who was interested in physiognomy. The alert traveler made a vivid impression upon Lavater, who asked permission to add a sketch of his head to a collection of pictures. Under date of September 5

⁸³ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 13; Sayre to Miranda, May 15, 1798, *ibid.*, vol. 23.

⁸⁴ Passport signed by De Kalitcheff, June 12, 1788, *ibid.*, vol. 14.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 15.

Miranda wrote the following entry in his journal: "Lavater's artist came promptly at 7 o'clock, and in less than an hour and a half he almost completed the portrait."⁸⁷

The only portrait extant of the precursor of Spanish-American independence in an early phase of his career was presumably drawn by Heinrich Lips von Kloten, an artist who drew many portraits for Lavater after 1772 and later became a professor at Weimar. This drawing depicts Miranda as a young dandy attired in a frilled shirt, a white waistcoat, and a coat of dark cloth. A forehead ample but slightly receding, luminous eyes, a prominent nose, a bold mouth, and a chin round and determined,—these were the most striking traits of a clean-shaven, handsome, and vivacious face. His physiognomy was admirably set off by artistically arranged and powdered hair which was worn long and fastened in a pigtail. With this crayon portrait before us we can more readily understand why Miranda occasionally depicted himself in his diary as one who was very popular with the ladies.

When Miranda departed, on September 9, 1788, Lavater presented him with a manuscript booklet entitled *Souvenir pour des voyageurs chers*, 1787, that contained the following dedication: "Here, my dear Mariat, is a mélange of thoughts for voyagers, which contains more that is true than is new. Whosoever travels learns that there is nothing that is absolutely old and nothing that is absolutely new under the sun."⁸⁸ After leaving Zurich the tourist saw the alluring city of Interlaken, the glacier at Wetterhorn, Mont Blanc "in all its majesty," and the imposing glacier at Chamonix. In the agreeable company of a professor named Pictet, he traversed the streets of Geneva, and made an excursion to the château of Ferney where Voltaire had composed his vitriolic booklets on the Old Régime. Miranda's diary further informs us that from Geneva he rode on horseback to Neuchâtel, whence he made a trip to the village of Motiers that had once been the

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

refuge of Jean Jacques Rousseau, author of the *Social Contract*.⁸⁹

In the guise of a Livonian gentleman, Miranda also paid brief visits to towns and cities near the French Riviera. During his first sojourn in Marseilles, in December, 1788, he wrote in his diary that he had visited Abbé Raynal, who confessed that his information about the Indies emanated from the Spanish Ambassador in Paris. Perhaps it was because Miranda landed at that port after an excursion to northern Italy that he outwitted the French police, who, at the instigation of the Spanish Government, had long since laid a snare to catch him if he ventured to enter northern France. Smith's warning that he would be in imminent danger of arrest did not deter him from visiting some provincial towns and then proceeding to Paris. Apparently he inspected its military and naval establishments as well as its palaces.⁹⁰

Unaware of the cataclysm that was threatening France, provided with a passport for M. de Meroff, a Livonian gentleman who was going to London with a domestic, early on a June morning Miranda left the gay French capital.⁹¹ In a letter to Samuel Ogden from the English metropolis, Stephen Sayre said: "Colo^l. Miranda dined with me, two days since, and the day after his return from Paris. His prejudices are still the same against the French nation and their manners."⁹² One of Miranda's disjected diarial jottings states that in June of the memorable year 1789 he took lodgings in the house of Mr. Barlow, 47 Jermyn Street, London, at a rent of one hundred guineas a year.⁹³

Extraordinary as was Miranda's trip through the United States for a man of his origin and epoch, his continental trip was even more extraordinary. He was probably the first well-informed native of Spanish or Portuguese America to travel through Europe. Besides beholding many monuments of the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome, he

⁸⁹ Mir. MSS., vols. 15, 16. ⁹⁰ *Diario, ibid.*, vol. 16; Antepara, p. 43.

⁹¹ Passport signed by P. Matorin dated June 3, 1789, Mir. MSS., vol. 17.

⁹² June 29, 1789, Knox MSS., vol. 24, f. 70. ⁹³ Mir. MSS., vol. 19.

had strengthened his hold of certain languages and increased his knowledge of the military art. He had "inspected the pages of tyranny in the great book of European nations." Fascinating anecdotes or incidents of courts and camps had been tapestried upon his mind. Further, in addition to a multitude of books and brochures that he had collected respecting Europe, he had kept a diary of his own romantic experiences which not only contained a veritable mine of information concerning conditions on the Continent but also revelations about his secret aspirations. Certain passages of the journal describing his own private life on this trip are unprintable. Neither space nor good taste has permitted more than a hint of certain orgies in which Miranda had indulged.

Largely because of his picturesque and ingratiating personality he had gained the esteem and favor of the Czarina. Reports that had meantime reached him concerning Spanish intrigues against his person must have made him disinclined to yield an iota of his pretensions to the King of Spain. Lists of embittered Jesuits residing in Italy who had been ruthlessly driven from the Spanish Indies he had carefully filed among his memorabilia. To his secret collection of manuscripts he had also added important papers respecting insurrections against Spanish rule that had been suppressed in Peru and New Granada. He had discreetly allowed a few confidants to catch alluring glimpses of his grand design. Even though he had not pleaded the cause of his native land at every court that he visited, yet he had interested prominent personages in the destiny of South America. He had become better equipped for the execution of his master purpose. In a testament which he framed a decade later Miranda avowed that the main object of his remarkable travels had been to seek that form of government which would best insure the establishment of a wise and judicious liberty in the Spanish-American colonies.

Chapter V

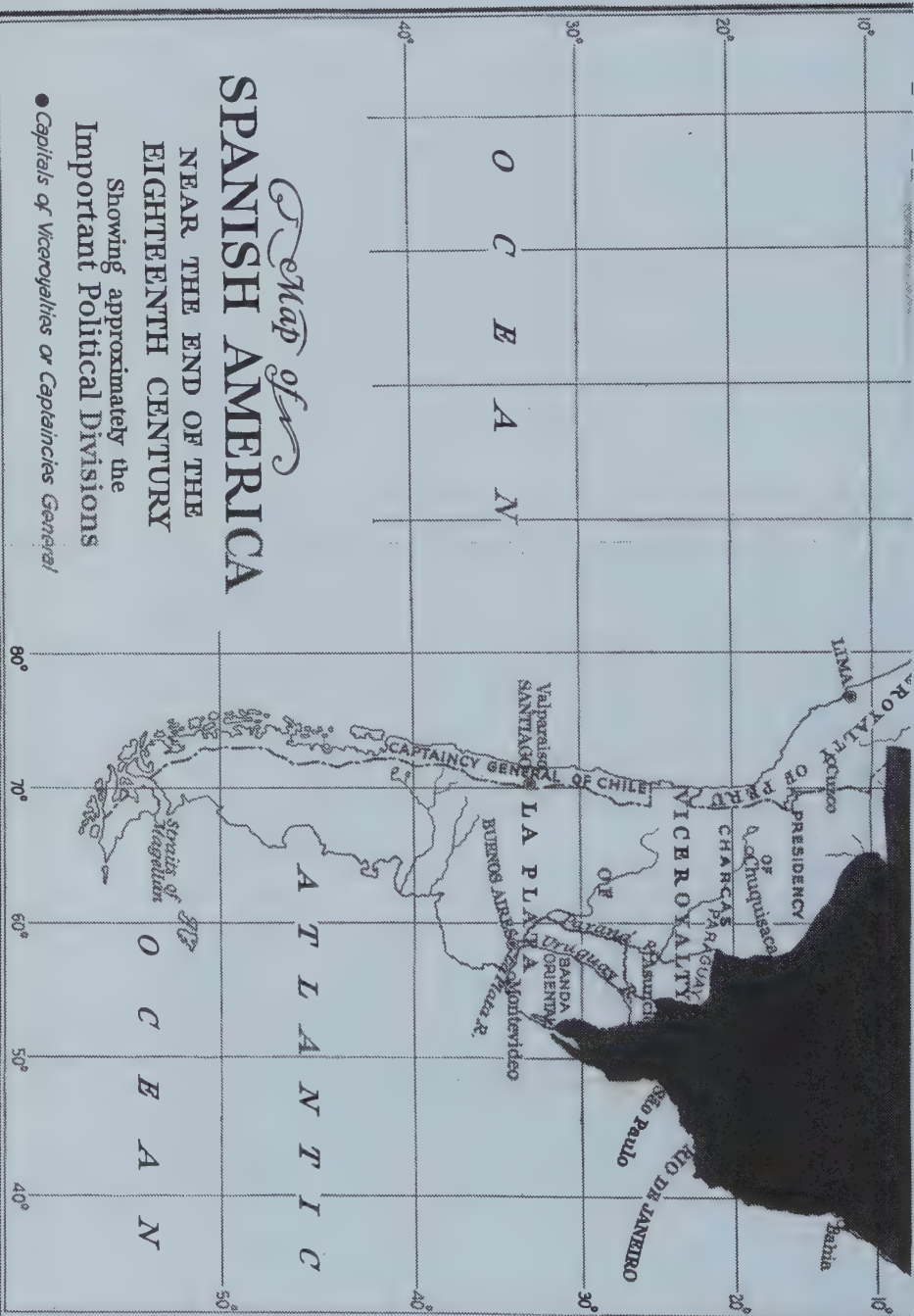
MIRANDA RENOUNCES THE SPANISH KING

ON HIS return to London the tourist found to his delight that the papers which he had left in Penman's custody had not fallen into the eager clutches of the Spaniards. In a short time he relinquished his plan of making a visit to the University of Edinburgh. He called on the Russian Ambassador, Count Woronzow, who wrote to St. Petersburg that "Count Miranda" was no simpleton and that clever Parisian sleuths would not be able to entice him away from England. Inkling of his continental adventures became known to intimate friends.

In the letter to Ogden of June 29, 1789, which has already been mentioned, Stephen Sayre, who was now in London, wrote that Miranda had traveled "to great advantage—nothing has escaped his *penetration*." Then, after mentioning in scandalous terms the traveler's intimacy with the Czarina, the American said that Miranda had "such Letters, to all her Ambassadors, as no other man ever received from a Crown'd Head. They command everything he may wish or desire. He talks of returning to Russia—I would never have left it, under the same circumstances, for I am fool enough to get into Love, when I get into favor."¹

Shortly after taking lodgings in London, Miranda divined that the Spaniards were watching his movements. In an autobiographical fragment he wrote that his suspicions were aroused by reports of whispered conversations between Spanish officials about his continental travels. Miranda recorded that although while dining in the Spanish legation he could detect nothing in the face of his host, yet he could read past events in the physiognomy of his secretary. Further, he stated that Bernardo del Campo alleged that he had heard nothing about him since his departure for the Continent and advised

¹ Knox MSS., vol. 24, f. 70.

● *Capitals of Viceroyalties or Captaincies General*



him to write again to Count Floridablanca. After declaring that Campo offered to write an epistle to accompany his, Miranda exclaimed indignantly: "Behold the chicanery of these people who think that they can deceive the whole world with impunity!"²

Either Colonel Miranda had not entirely relinquished thoughts of serving under the Spanish flag or else he was anxious to conceal his real intentions. On June 29, 1789, the colonel sent a letter to Campo, who had become a marquis, to inquire what action the court of Madrid had taken concerning his petition of April 10, 1785. In reply the Marquis asserted that he had heard nothing about him recently and that, as he had even been ignorant of his whereabouts, he had concluded that he had adjusted his affairs with Spain.³ Miranda accordingly wrote to Count Floridablanca to allege that although he received attractive offers to enter the service of other nations during his recent travels, yet he had awaited Spain's response to his plea before making a decision.⁴ By this time the astute creole realized that Spain's agents regarded him with animosity.

A worthless Spaniard even trumped up a charge of debt against Miranda who evidently escaped a debtor's prison or covert transportation to France only by an avowal that he was attached to the Russian legation in London.⁵ "I understand perfectly," wrote Miranda to Count Bezborodko, "that this was an artifice of the Spanish Ambassador in order to fathom my relations with Russia: His Excellency has received me in friendly fashion, inviting me to dine with him, and so on, but nevertheless I am informed from a reliable source that he has secret instructions to work against me. It is accordingly natural for me to take measures to frustrate his persecutions; on my part I simulate complete ignorance of his activities, and apparently maintain perfect harmony with him. Such

² *Diario*, June 25, 1789, Mir. MSS., vol. 13; Grisanti, *Miranda y la Emperatriz Catalina la Grande*, p. 104.

³ Grisanti, pp. 104-5.

⁴ July 15, 1789, Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

⁵ Parra-Pérez, *Miranda et la révolution française*, p. xlvii.

people should be paid in their own coin.”⁶ In a letter to Potemkin on July 21, 1789, he informed that Prince of the efficient protection against Spanish intrigue afforded him during his travels by the Russian ægis. As a token of his appreciation of the Prince’s kindness, Miranda sent him two fine field glasses; and he offered to have identical glasses made for Count Mamonov by the same optician.⁷ Like a mariner whose craft is being rudely tossed about in an angry harbor, Miranda hastily cast an anchor to windward.

On July 20, 1789, Miranda addressed a letter to Catherine II that exhibits him in the rôle of a courtier:

“I have requested Count Woronzow to add my name to the list of the embassy of Your Imperial Majesty. To me this appears sufficient,—in conjunction with some slight legal precautions,—to prevent any iniquitous proceedings that the Spaniards might undertake. As I have thus secured by your kindness the repose and tranquillity that I need in order to revise my observations and to become useful in the future, I am incessantly busy, and trust that I shall continue under the magnanimous auspices of Your Majesty. Your ægis is the only protection that remains to me after the perfidious persecution which has been undertaken against me from Madrid,—a persecution which stealthily deprives me of my patrimonial resources and even of correspondence with my relatives in America! Happy those persons who under the government of an enlightened, wise, and philosophic Sovereign are sheltered from fanaticism and the Inquisition and who can pass their days enjoyably in the cultivation of letters and the exercise of virtue! May the Supreme Being prolong the inestimable life of Your Imperial Majesty for the happiness of your own subjects and the consolation of all mankind!”⁸

On October 9, 1789, Campo sent a long dispatch to Floridablanca to ask about the attitude that he should assume.

⁶ Mir. MSS., vol. 18; Grisanti, p. 106.

⁷ Miranda to Mamonov and to Potemkin, July 21, 1789, Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

⁸ Mir. MSS., vol. 18; Grisanti, pp. 107-8. Although in a dispatch to St. Petersburg, Aug. 5, 1789, Woronzow stated that he had added Miranda’s name to the roll of his legation (Parra-Pérez, p. xlvii), yet search in the Public Record Office does not reveal such a list.

The Spanish envoy had become convinced that the discredited officer sincerely wished to have his honor vindicated; that he would not return to Spain without a royal safe-conduct; and that, although England would doubtless concede him such protection as Russia had granted, yet he had not dared to enter into relations with English ministers. With a sympathetic appreciation of Miranda's character Campo declared that he would "rejoice in spirit when either through rigorous justice or the benignity" of the King he saw "this stray sheep return to the fold. Otherwise," he added, "I shall live in constant anxiety; for, although at the present moment this youth does not display a desire of acting against his King and country, yet circumstances may so alter that, when engaged in the service of another nation, he may be drawn step by step into measures offensive to Spain. Upon an earlier occasion I have portrayed his personality,—accomplishments above the average, zeal and impetuosity in his demeanor, an exalted imagination, and, above all, an extraordinary activity. Endowed with such a combination of qualities, if this young man becomes exasperated and is forced to enter the service of a foreign power, I believe he will always disdain a course that insures a tranquil and uneventful life and prefer one which promises an active and unique career."⁹

Despite the conciliatory attitude of the Marquis del Campo, his government did not relent. On January 20, 1790, Count Floridablanca formally instructed the Marquis that because of weighty reasons King Charles IV could not place any confidence in Colonel Miranda. Campo responded on February 28 to say that he had endeavored to encourage in Miranda a spirit which would be least inimical to Spain. The Minister asked for a message from court implying his own good faith which he could display to the disgraced officer. At last, on April 6, 1790, Floridablanca formulated his verdict in these phrases: "The King has considered all that you have written on various occasions as well as what you said in your letter

⁹ Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 516-17.

of February 28 in favor of Don Francisco de Miranda, but unless this gentleman defends and justifies his conduct in a certain suit His Majesty cannot deign to employ him.”¹⁰

This tardy decision was made known to Colonel Miranda near the end of April. The Marquis del Campo informed Count Floridablanca that the colonel “appeared somewhat surprised and extraordinarily saddened,” and that he asked for a copy of the Count’s letter, which favor, said Campo, he could readily grant, for “it was couched in suitable terms.”¹¹ Convinced by information which he had gleaned from various quarters that he would be thrust into a dungeon if he ventured into Spain, Miranda had decided not to appear personally in the suit concerning contraband trade that was still pending in the Council of the Indies. Thus it was that, after asking the Marquis to return a biography which he had borrowed, and after tendering him “a thousand thanks” for his favors, the Venezuelan withdrew from Campo’s society,—never again to cross the threshold of a Spanish legation.¹²

In the draft of a letter to Charles IV, Miranda expressed the opinion that, instead of according him satisfaction for the injuries and insults which he had suffered, the Spaniards had been hatching new plots against him,—“thus harshly compelling me to sacrifice all my property and income and, what is worse, to renounce the pleasant society of my parents and other relatives in order to seek a country that would at least treat me with justice and assure me civil tranquillity.”¹³ At last Miranda had formally renounced the government that had bestowed honors and distinctions upon his family. So far as Peninsular Spain was concerned, he became an Ishmael.

Meantime he had not lost touch with America. In the extensive and varied collection of visiting cards that Miranda carefully preserved, which included cards from several English noblemen, there was one showing that Colonel “Pozo Sucre” and other Spanish Americans had called at his lodg-

¹⁰ A. G. S., estado, 8148. ¹¹ May 6, 1790, *ibid.*

¹² Miranda to Campo, April 26 and 29, 1790, *ibid.*

¹³ April 23, 1790, Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

ings.¹⁴ In a letter to General Knox, who was now secretary of war for the United States, Miranda made this inquiry: "Pray, is your Roman plan of military Legions aprouved or not? I think it is the best forme we can adopt."¹⁵

Diarial jottings indicate that Miranda used his leisure to inspect English antiquities. Among these was the residence of Sir Isaac Newton. He visited London's museums, libraries, and clubs. He attended a banquet in honor of the Lord Mayor. His palate was tickled, we may be sure, with English roast beef and plum pudding. As a compensation for the renunciation of his two-faced Spanish acquaintances, he got into closer touch with the rich and varied life of the English metropolis.

He soon had an opportunity to renew his friendship with Sir William Johnstone, an English officer whom he had met in the West Indies.¹⁶ A toast was drunk in Miranda's honor at a meeting of St. Andrew's Society because of "his very handsome and benevolent behaviour" towards English prisoners of war in Cuba.¹⁷ By letters of introduction he became acquainted with Englishmen in various walks of life. Through the kind offices of General Roy, he dined with Sir George Yonge, secretary of war.¹⁸ Sir Frederick Haldimand, ex-governor of British North America, with whom Miranda dined frequently, declared that he found his guest every day more interesting.¹⁹ Among his new friends was a retired military officer with literary interests named General Melville, who soon formed the habit of inviting him to dinner and of asking his advice about geographical and historical problems.²⁰

Dr. John Marshall found much delight in his company. From Lynn on February 10, 1790, Marshall wrote Miranda a letter reflecting his opinion of the traveler. "I saw you in town with pleasure, and I left you with regret. I consider you now as the modern Puffendorf: The history of Europe (y

¹⁴ *Ibid.* ¹⁵ Mar. 29, 1790, Knox MSS., vol. 26, f. 10.

¹⁶ Johnstone to Miranda, July 29, 1789, Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

¹⁷ Melville to Miranda, Dec. 3, 1789, *ibid.*, vol. 22.

¹⁸ Roy to Miranda, Oct. 10, 1789, *ibid.*, vol. 18.

¹⁹ *Report on Canadian Archives*, 1889, pp. 249, 269, 289.

²⁰ Melville to Miranda, Oct. 29, Dec. 3, 1789, Mir. MSS., vol. 22.

mas) you are perfectly Master of." In a letter to "the Spaniard Peter" on March 16, the physician conveyed the view that Miranda was composing a memoir of his travels and expressed the hope that he would publish it. "Remember that this World, in all parts, is still very young, very foolish, and very unjust. Teach it therefore, more wisdom, and more generosity." He advised the traveler "by all means, to write without any reference to books or to former opinions. Describe men and things as they *really struck yourself at the time*." ²¹

However it seems probable that instead of composing memoirs Miranda had been framing memorials. The following paragraph from a letter of John Turnbull, the English merchant whom he had met at Cadiz, dated January 28, 1790, proves that the refugee had entered into relations with influential English publicists:

"I have hitherto delayed to acknowledge and thank you for your very agreeable Letter, in hopes from day to day to hear of your having finished satisfactorily your depending and very interesting Concerns. You mention that on the Sunday after the date of your Letter you were to have a Conference on the Subject; but I fear that it has been put off, not having had the pleasure of hearing from you since. Your Friend, Governor Pownall, with whom I am frequently, and from whom I have just parted, is also anxious to hear of your having concluded the matter, as you will discover, entirely to your wishes, and we are both of us the more uneasy at the Delay, as after the Parliament meets it is to be feared that Mr. P—'s Time and Attention will be entirely employed. I am also apprehensive that you may have been a little incommoded from want of Pecuniary Assistance. We purpose returning to London in ten or twelve Days—but in the meantime I shall be happy to know what Progress is made in your Business." ²²

Ex-governor Pownall was strongly attracted by Miranda's personality and designs. As a student of politics Pownall had become interested in the Spanish Indies while serving as gov-

²¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

²² *Ibid.*



Thomas Pownall. From Pownall's "Thomas Pownall."
Reproduced by courtesy of Henry Stevens, Son, and
Stiles.

ernor of English colonies in North America. Perhaps the ex-governor felt that Miranda was an "injured enterprising Genius" who would, as he had predicted in a booklet published in 1780, conduct a revolution that would lead "to the establishment of a great Monarchy" in Spanish America.²³

In any case, from January 13 to January 24, 1790, Pownall had such full and confidential communication with Miranda about the Spanish Indies as convinced him that if the "proper occasion" arose the South American might be able to perform an "important service" for England. With Miranda's permission the Englishman conveyed a suggestion to William Pitt that he had conversed with a foreigner on a subject of importance to English power, finance, and commerce, and that if the Minister desired he would transmit some preliminary communications.²⁴ Soon afterwards Pownall received a hint that Pitt desired an interview with him. In his unrevised journal Pownall thus described his subsequent proceedings. On February 9 he went to see the Prime Minister and described the general purport of the proposed measure that would undoubtedly lay a firm basis for "the future power of Great Britain," would open "an almost inexhaustible source of Commerce," and might enable her to pay a part of her national debt. This measure was to assist discontented Spanish Americans by an auxiliary naval and military force to start a revolution, while other colonists were forming an independent government. Pownall explained the condition of wealth, population, and politics in the Spanish Indies, "that all this is a mine ready charged" to which only a match had to be applied. He also explained that the instruments to be used were some Jesuits who had been exiled from America and certain expatriated South Americans. "Here I introduce particularly Col. Miranda, the Person proposed to be communicated with as precisely the person in Character, Knowledge, and Activity to plan, conduct, and execute this measure, with

²³ Pownall, *A Memorial*, pp. 26-27.

²⁴ "Extracts from Governor Pownall's Journals," *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 45.

whom I had considered and concerted the Plan, which I am ready to communicate in general, and also in Detail.”²⁵

In these overtures Pownall also mentioned the remuneration that he believed the oppressed colonists should offer for English aid. Evidently he proposed to the Prime Minister that the Spanish Americans should give England a portion of the revenue which they had been accustomed to pay to Spain. They were to reimburse England the expenses that she might incur because of her share in liberating them. In addition they were to pay her an annual subsidy until a certain fraction of the English debt was thus paid. They were to open their ports for several years, at least to the commerce of England and the United States. Pownall also proposed to Pitt that, as there were many enterprising persons in North America who wished to see South America emancipated, if England undertook this task she should try to discover whether the United States would participate. After England had actually undertaken offensive measures, she could announce that her operations contemplated “neither conquest nor commercial monopoly,” but that she intended to give liberty to an “oppressed people.” A feature of the military operations should be the occupation of the Isthmus of Panama. Pownall’s part in the formation of this tentative project is suggested in his statement that it might be better to get the details directly from Colonel Miranda.²⁶

In February, 1790, circumstances favored the presentation of Miranda’s designs to the English Government. A dispute had broken out between England and Spain about the right to make settlements on the northwest coast of North America near Nootka Sound. At that inlet a Spanish commander named Martínez had seized Englishmen who had sailed from China with the purpose of planting a colony. In fine, the controversy about Nootka Sound was the outcome of rival claims

²⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

²⁶ *Ibid.* Cf. on Pownall’s share in forming the project, Pownall, *Thomas Pownall*, pp. 440, 459-60.

to territory: the Spanish title to sovereignty over that region was based mainly on discovery and exploration, while the English claim was based on discovery, trading voyages, and actual colonization. This acrimonious dispute had far-reaching possibilities; for France was bound to Spain by the Bourbon Family Compact. On the other side of the Atlantic, statesmen of the New Republic that was flanked by possessions of both England and Spain began to speculate about the policy which they should adopt.

The prospect of hostilities between England and Spain whetted Pitt's appetite for projects directed against the Spanish dominions in America. Miranda had already been favorably mentioned to the Prime Minister by Captain William Johnstone. On July 29, 1789, that officer sent a note to Miranda that inclosed a letter intended for Pitt. "The Letter," said Johnstone, "will call to his recollection the conversation" I had at his house "in your behalf and the just Statement of the kind of treatment which I communicated the prisoners of war had experienced through your means at the Havanah." ²⁷ Through ex-governor Pownall an arrangement was accordingly made that the soldier who had fought with England's enemies during the American Revolution should be given an opportunity to present his plans to Pitt. In a register kept by Miranda the following undated entry is found: "Assignment given by Mr. Pitt. Hollwood, Kent, four miles beyond Bromley on the road to Westerham." ²⁸

William Pitt was the second son of the Earl of Chatham, "the Great Commoner." In July, 1782, at the early age of twenty-three, the gifted youth became Chancellor of the Exchequer and took up his residence in the vast, awkward house in Downing Street. Francisco de Miranda met the Prime Minister for the first time in his country house at Hollwood in the county of Kent on Sunday, February 14, 1790. Among Pitt's favorite books Miranda noticed the *Parliamentary Debates*, Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, Livy's *History*, and

²⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 45.

also the works of Euripides and Samuel Johnson.

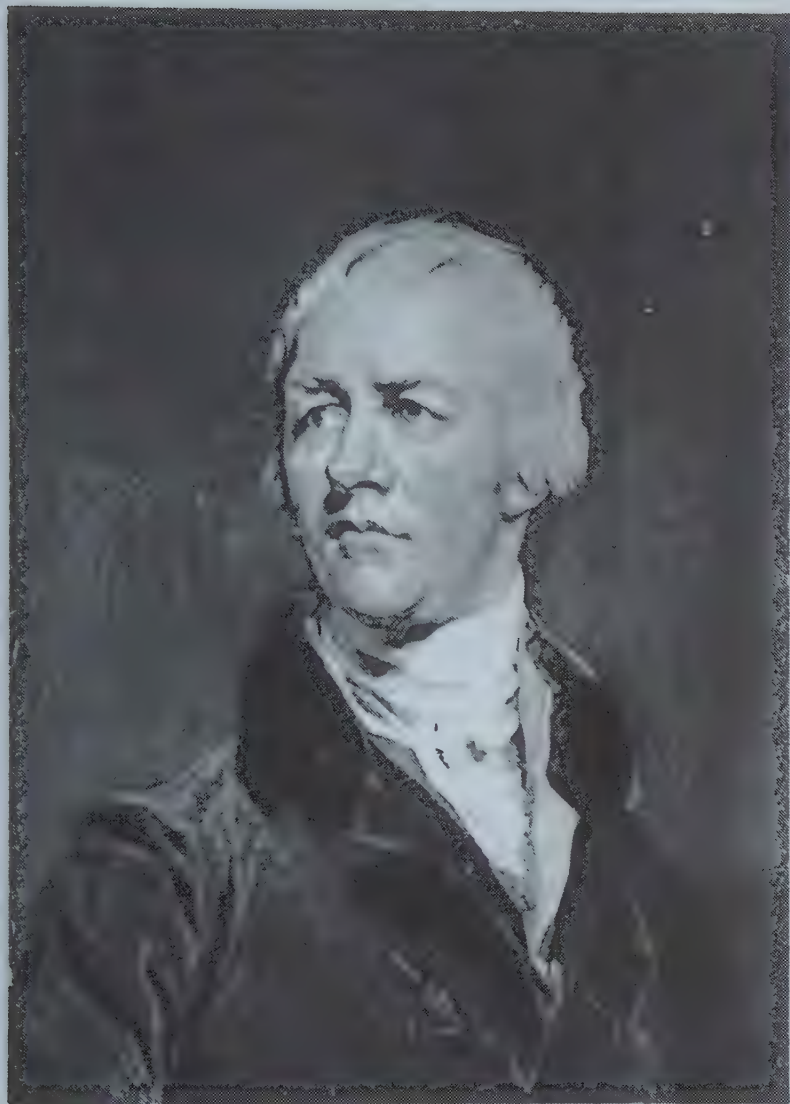
In his notes Miranda left a memorandum asserting that the plan of operations which he proposed to Pitt was to be carried out without fail at the moment when England made a declaration of war against Spain.²⁹ Miranda declared that the general character of his proposals was considered and that the new form of government "intended to be introduced in South America" was fully explained as well as his personal circumstances and actual situation.³⁰ Negotiations were meantime initiated for a pacific settlement of the Nootka Sound Controversy. On February 26 the Duke of Leeds, who was England's secretary of foreign affairs, informed the Marquis del Campo that it was necessary to suspend any discussion of Spain's pretensions until "a just and adequate satisfaction shall have been made for a proceeding so injurious to Great Britain."³¹

In March, 1790, Miranda transmitted to Pitt some papers concerning Spanish America. Among these was a précis of the conditions that justified English intervention. The revolutionary criticized Spain's policy of excluding creoles from office. He denounced the pernicious censorship of the Inquisition which prohibited Spanish Americans from reading useful or instructive books. He mentioned certain revolts that had been provoked in South America by excessive taxes and other burdens; he declared that the South Americans had a right to reject Spanish rule and to form a free, wise, and equitable government. He asserted that, being superior in wealth and population to Spain, South America might be able to carry out the revolution unaided, if it were not for the enormous difficulties of intercommunication which made unity of action impossible and for the lack of vessels with which to counteract Spain's naval measures. To quote from a plea in English that Miranda had evidently prepared with the aid of

²⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 45. See *infra*, p. 102, note 32.

³⁰ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 711-12.

³¹ Rose, *William Pitt and National Revival*, p. 566. See further Manning, "The Nootka Sound Controversy," in *Am. Hist. Assn. Rept.*, 1905, p. 369.



William Pitt. Painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence. In the National Gallery, London. Mezzotint by G. Turner. In the collection of the British Museum.

Pownall and which he presumably presented to Pitt:

“No Power can do this with greater facility than England, and under the principles of Justice, perfect reciprocity in regard to Spain, and for her own welfare. South-America has a very extensive Trade to offer with preference to England; has Treasure for to pay with punctuality the services that she may receive . . . and even for to pay an essential part of the national debt of England. For which reason conceiving this important subject of mutual interest to both parties, South America hopes that being united by a Solemn Compact with England; establishing a free and similar government; and combining a Plan of Commerce reciprocally advantagious, these two nations may form the most respectable and preponderant Political union in the World.

“Considering the analogy that exists in the Character of these two nations; and the effects that naturally must flow from *Liberty*, and a good Government, giving an instruction to the general mass of men, that will progressively expel the religious prejudices that offuscate the minds of that People . . . otherwise honest, hospitable, and generous—we must expect to see soon growing up a respectable and illustrious nation, worthy of being the intimate Allie of the most wise and celebrated Power upon earth.

“The adjoined *Statement* will show the Population, Wealth, and actual Products of South-America; her consumptions from Europe allso; and a comparative Plan of Old Spain at present, by which it may be conceived the disparity that results in favor of the former; and the impossibility in which Spain is, of making any efficacious opposition if the stated combination should take place.

“The practicability of all the military opperations (for which purpose only 12 or 15,000 men inf. and 15 sail of the line are required) is a subject to be explained afterwards, if required. As well as the possibility of making without much difficulty a *Canal* of navigation across the Isthmus of Panama, that will facilitate the Commerce of China, and the

South-sea with innumerable advantages for England and America." ⁸²

In addition to this memoir Miranda submitted instructive data concerning the Spanish Indies. Its population he estimated at about eleven million people that he divided into two groups: the peninsular Spaniards, creoles, negroes, mestizos, and colored persons who amounted to five million; and the Indians, either nominally subject to Spanish rule or entirely independent, who aggregated six million. He calculated that the gold, silver, cochineal, indigo, cacao, sugar, hides, and tobacco produced annually in Spanish America came to fifty-five million pesos. He estimated that there were exported to it every year from Spain products valued at twenty-two million pesos, while an equal amount of merchandise was introduced into the colonies through illicit trade. He presented figures to show that the regular soldiers in the Spanish Indies numbered some thirteen thousand men, while the colonial militia came to twenty thousand. He stated that Spain had in the West Indies and on the western coast of South America only four ships and four frigates. In a summary that evidently included contingents which were not stationed in America, Miranda estimated the armed forces of Spain at thirty-six thousand soldiers. Her naval forces he set at forty-four thousand sailors and one hundred and twenty-three ships.⁸³

Miranda also submitted to the Prime Minister a project in French for the government of the liberated Spanish-American colonies. The territory of the proposed state was to be bordered on the east by the Atlantic coast line, the Brazilian and

⁸² Mar. 5, 1790, Mir. MSS., vol. 45. Among the comments affixed by Miranda to a letter to Pitt, Mar. 19, 1799 (*ibid.*), was the following: "Les ouvertures furent faites à Mr. Pitt dans sa maison de Campagne à Hollwood au mois de Fevrier 1790—et le resultat fue une *Stipulation* formelle, par la quelle l'Angleterre s'obligeoit (en cas d'une Guerre quelconque avec l'Espagne) de donner du secours aux Colonies pour obtenir leur independance absolu;—et ceux ci prometoient à l'Angleterre un parte de Commerce avantageux, sans monopole ni exclusion des autres nations—A cet effet le soussigné devoit remettre au Ministre les Memoirs, Plans, et tableaux militaires et Commerciaux dont ont etoient convenus, &c. . . . ce que eût lieu le 5 Mars 1790." As will be shown, Miranda overestimated the encouragement given by Pitt.

⁸³ "Apuntes sobre la América Española, Febrero, 1790," *ibid.*

Guianan boundaries, and the Mississippi River. On the north it was to be limited by the parallel of 45° which was to be followed from the source of the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean. On the west the Pacific coast line was to form the boundary, which was to run south as far as Cape Horn. Islands situated within 10° of the western coast were to be within the jurisdiction of this vast state, but to the east only Cuba should be included, as Habana was "the key to the Gulf of Mexico."

Executive authority was to be vested in a descendant of the Incas who should be styled "emperor." His position was to be hereditary. Legislative power was to be given to a bicameral congress. The upper house or senate should be composed of a certain number of senators or "caziques" who were to be selected by the emperor for life from citizens who had held important offices. Members of the lower chamber, which was styled the house of commons, were to be chosen by popular vote. They were to hold office for five years and might be re-elected. Their persons were declared to be inviolate during their term of office, except for capital crimes. Federal judges were to be appointed by the chief executive from distinguished members of the judiciary. They were to hold their positions for life unless deprived of them by a judgment of forfeiture.

Censors, ediles, and questors were to be chosen to serve for five years. Two censors were to watch over the morality of young people, senators, educators, and educational institutions. Ediles were to be intrusted with the care of ports, canals, highways, public monuments, and national feasts. The questors were to supervise the fiscal administration of the state.

No law contrary to the spirit of the constitution was to be valid. Proposals for its amendment might be made by two-thirds of both houses of the legislature and should become effective when approved by three-fourths of a council composed of the emperor and the judges of high national courts. Proposals for its amendment might also be made by a majority of two-thirds of this council and should go into force when

approved by three-fourths of both houses of the legislature.⁸⁴

Certain clauses raise the query whether this constitution was designed to form the fundamental law for a federation or for an empire. Perhaps the best answer is to style it a scheme for a constitutional monarchy. The project declared that the form of government should be "mixed and similar to that of Great Britain." Suggestions for this frame of government had been gleaned by Miranda from various sources. The clauses regarding the hereditary executive and the legislature were largely based on his knowledge of the English Government, which he had long admired. His political notions had evidently been influenced by the ideas of Pownall who had proposed in 1783 that the United States should adopt a mixed form of government with a monarch as chief executive. Stipulations in Miranda's constitution concerning its amendment were patterned after provisions in the United States Constitution. The articles regarding censors, ediles, and questors were the outcome of his study of Roman history. The adaptation of Amerindian institutions had been suggested by his knowledge of South American aborigines and by his perusal of manuscripts concerning the revolt of Tupac Amaru, a descendant of the Incas.

A proclamation in English, which was probably drafted by Pownall, was undoubtedly intended—when translated into Spanish—for distribution among Spanish Americans. This manifesto outlined the steps to be taken for the formation of a provisional local government. A "Native and Noble Citizen of South America" should be permitted temporarily to assume the position that had been vacated by the Spanish viceroy or governor. That temporary official should hold his position for five years and should govern by the advice of a council of thirty-five members who were to be chosen by deputies appointed by magistrates of *cabildos*. Until this council was convoked, with the aid of the *cabildo* of the capital city, the pro-

⁸⁴ "Projet de Constitution pour les Colonies hispano-américaines," Ch. MSS., bundle 345.

visional governor was to be the sole civil and military ruler of a particular region.

Unless altered by the governor and his council, those ordinances, regulations, and decrees of the Spanish Government that composed the "Laws of the Indies" were to remain in force. To the clergy was reserved the right of jurisdiction over purely ecclesiastical cases. Yet the Inquisition, having become "unnecessary," was to be "abolished forever." The Church was to continue in the enjoyment of its properties. All government monopolies were to be abolished. The capitation tax that had been imposed upon the Indians was to be swept away. Other taxes and duties that had been levied by Spain were to be collected by the new government but the resulting revenue was to be "the property of the nation."

The governor and council were to make laws for the organization and discipline of the land and naval forces. They could grant military and naval commissions and establish military tribunals. They might even contract with a foreign power for additional soldiers and sailors. If they saw fit, they could negotiate a "Foederal Alliance, and Treaty of Commerce, with Great Britain" and with all nations that acknowledged Spanish-American independence. The governor and council were also to have the authority to issue decrees and ordinances that should have the force of laws until a "General Representative Legislature" should be assembled.³⁵

Ignorant of England's diplomacy with Spain, Miranda and Pownall were puzzled as to the proper course to pursue. The ex-governor sent an epistle to Miranda in March, 1790, to intimate that his scheme could be carried out only in case of a war and to counsel him to observe "silent patience" in his negotiations.³⁶ The South American was evidently in financial distress; for on March 18 Turnbull sent him a check for fifty pounds, with a promissory note to be signed for two hundred pounds that he had already advanced. The merchant advised

³⁵ Endorsed, "August the 3^d., 1790," *ibid*.

³⁶ Mar. 18, 1790, Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

him to be cautious in regard to his finances :

"I would really, my Dear Sir, wish to recommend to you, some pretty serious consideration respecting your future Resources—Although your present negotiation should have the desired Effects which I have no doubt that it will, yet it will not probably for some time produce any money." ⁸⁷

On April 16 Pownall wrote to express regret that Miranda had sent any of his papers to the Prime Minister, to hint that the precious documents ought not to have left his hands, and to explain that Pitt's time was engrossed by matters concerning the national budget and parliamentary elections. He advised Miranda not to require an interview or an immediate decision, at least so far as concerned him "personally." ⁸⁸ On April 30 Pownall wrote again to advise his protégé how to conduct his negotiations with Pitt after the juncture was reached when he could procrastinate no longer. In a letter that was couched in crude phrases Miranda was admonished against urging or expecting a decision upon the subject of his proposals. The ex-governor advised that if Miranda were selected as the instrument to carry out the emancipatory proposals that he should require a decision as to the place where he should await the first move, because of the necessity of giving "a decisive answer" to offers from his august Russian protector. Pownall's alternating hopes and fears were thus expressed :

"I cannot finish this letter without saying that at the same time that I fear to see the flattering prospect we had in View crossed by a cold dark blast—I can yet raise to my mind's Eye another Prospect of better hopes ; and fancy that I see it coming forward into the horizon of affairs—When I place myself on the Shores of Kamscatsky I can almost stretch forth a hand of friendly assistance to Mexico so as to touch any beginning of effort towards Emancipation, and with this hope I will say—*melioribus inter Fabis*—God bless you." ⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

However, events changed so that Miranda was afforded an opportunity further to develop his plans. The English cabinet decided to demand adequate satisfaction for the "outrages" committed by Martínez. On May 4 Leeds and Pitt sent a note to Campo in which they maintained that Spain's reply to their communications was unacceptable. They argued that English subjects in the neighborhood of Vancouver Island had the "unquestioned right to a free and undisturbed enjoyment of the benefits of commerce, navigation, and fishery, and also to the possession of such establishments as they may form, with the consent of the natives, in places unoccupied by other European nations."⁴⁰ Thus they nailed their colors to the mast.

On the evening of May 6, when Miranda had returned to his lodgings after listening to a debate in the House of Commons, Joseph Smith, Pitt's secretary, called on him to deliver a communication from "Downing Street." This note suggested that he should visit the Prime Minister at a time "when Mr. Pitt can meet Him without it's being likely to be observed."⁴¹ Read what Miranda wrote in a contemporary memorandum about the ensuing conference:

"I proceeded to the Treasury with Smith and there met Mr. Pitt who introduced me to Mr. Grenville. We conversed together for a long time. Pitt showed me my plans which he had carried in a green box to a Cabinet Council. We talked about Gage's *Travels* and about the disposition of the people of Caracas and other provinces to join English forces for the purpose of securing their liberty and independence. It appeared to me that the Prime Minister only desired to be assured that upon the appearance of English soldiers on the coast of those sections of Spanish America which had been designated, the inhabitants would be disposed to receive us with arms in their hands and to march immediately to initiate the revolution."⁴²

⁴⁰ Rose, *William Pitt and National Revival*, pp. 569-70.

⁴¹ May 6, 1790, Mir. MSS., vol. 45. ⁴² Undated, *ibid.*

In another memorandum Miranda added that they subsequently held other conferences to discuss such matters as "the mode of conducting the operations."⁴³ During the negotiations he evidently sent the Prime Minister a plan of the fortifications and defenses of Habana, documents concerning rebellions that had taken place in 1781 in Peru and New Granada, and lists of Jesuits exiled from the Spanish Indies who in 1786 were residing in Italy.⁴⁴ Miranda evidently believed that those papers would convince Pitt that the Spanish Americans were ripe for emancipation, "if the delicate points" of their religion and independence were properly adjusted.⁴⁵ To judge by Miranda's later projects, the immediate point of attack was to be either his native province or the Isthmus of Panama. Obviously he expected that the insurrection would spread throughout the Spanish-American colonies.

It appears that Sir Archibald Campbell was selected to take charge of an expedition against South America.⁴⁶ A naval officer named Thomas Graves was evidently instructed to collect information concerning the coast of Venezuela and the neighboring Isthmus. English ministers also gathered data about strategic points in Central America and Mexico.⁴⁷ They contemplated an offensive movement against the Spaniards from British Honduras as a base. They took measures to prepare for an attack upon the west coast of the Spanish Indies. They also seriously considered an expedition against the city of Mexico and New Orleans. Divers Englishmen thus took steps that would enable Pitt to kindle revolutionary fires in various sections of Spain's American dominions.

In June, 1790, after the court of Madrid had categorically declined to give satisfaction for injuries to English subjects at Nootka Sound, Lord Camden wrote to the Prime Minister to express his serious concern at this refusal. "War," said he,

⁴³ Undated, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

⁴⁴ "Liste de Papiers et c. remis au tres honble. W. Pitt," inclosure in Miranda's letter to Pitt, Sept. 18, 1791, *ibid.* ⁴⁵ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 713.

⁴⁶ Campbell to Pitt, Oct. 26, 1790, Ch. MSS., bundle 120.

⁴⁷ Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 276-77.

“as I always thought, was inevitable, and to temporize impossible.”⁴⁸ The ports of England soon resounded with the din of preparations; while her naval officers began to anticipate adventurous voyages to Mexico or the South Sea.

The Nootka Sound Controversy furnished Francisco de Miranda with the stimulus that was necessary for the formulation of his plans. As presented to William Pitt they contemplated the revolutionizing of the Spanish Indies by discontented colonists who were to be effectively aided by English military and naval forces. Though Miranda evidently pined to be the chief commander of the liberating expedition, yet it is not plain in what capacity the English Government aimed to utilize him, whether as agent, commissary, instigator, guide, or commander. In return for the aid furnished by England the promoter promised her commercial concessions and, on one occasion, even hinted at limited territorial grants on the coast of South America. In Miranda's mind the chief political result of the emancipation of his native Continent from Spanish rule was to be the founding of a vast constitutional monarchy stretching from the sources of the river Mississippi to Cape Horn. Accordingly there was thus presented to English statesmen for the first time the prospect of Spanish-American emancipation as a weight that might be cast into the fluctuating scale of European politics.

Not only did the prospect of initiating an insurrection in South America seem promising because of the interest that Pitt displayed but also because of the hope which the promoter entertained that prominent citizens of North America would lend their coöperation. Unfortunately for his knowledge of international relations Miranda did not meet Gouverneur Morris who had been sent from America as informal agent to confer about the evacuation of frontier posts that were still retained by the English. Animated by sanguine expectations resulting from his American travels, Miranda fixed his eyes upon a great triumvirate: General Washington, who

⁴⁸ Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 574, note 2.

had become president of the United States, Henry Knox, secretary of war, and Alexander Hamilton, secretary of the treasury. On March 15, 1790, Miranda wrote to General Knox to inquire why he had not replied to an earlier letter and to ask if he had forgotten his friends and his promises. As in a previous epistle, he desired to be remembered to Hamilton and Washington.⁴⁹

Knox did not respond until September 6, 1790, when, ignoring the delicate relations between the United States and Spain, he wrote to state that despite the delay his "warm friendship" for Miranda was "still undiminished a single particle," and that he looked forward "with pleasure" to the time when he should again enjoy his conversation.⁵⁰ A ray of hope was conveyed to Miranda by an undated letter of William Duer introducing a friend who was about to pay a visit to Europe: "Colo. Hamilton and all your Friends here are well —when we are together, you are frequently the subject of Conversation, and affectionate Remembrance."⁵¹ It was perhaps unfortunate that Miranda did not write directly to Secretary Hamilton about the revolutionizing of Spanish America, for in August, 1790, that Secretary had expressed the opinion to President Washington that the United States should cultivate relations with England rather than with Spain. From Knox the promoter of revolution could scarcely expect any encouragement in his project to enlist the aid of the United States because that Secretary had expressed to Washington the opinion that his government should pursue a neutral policy in the Nootka Sound Controversy. Miranda was reluctantly forced to realize that his friends in North America were not burning with ardor for Spanish-American emancipation and that his hope of coöperation from the American Republic at this juncture was illusory.

Eventually circumstances did not force the United States to choose between an alliance with one or another of the con-

⁴⁹ Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-78.

⁵⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 45. ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 18.

tending parties. Pressed by the English diplomat, Fitzherbert, Floridablanca soon inclined toward a pacific solution. On July 24, 1790, the Spanish Minister signed a declaration that his government would give satisfaction for the seizure of English property near Vancouver Island. On the other side, Fitzherbert signed a counter declaration which stated that the English King would consider the performance of this promise as full and entire satisfaction for the injury committed. Further, perhaps through the use of English gold proffered by Pitt's semi-official agents, in the end of August the National Assembly decided that France should recognize only the defensive and commercial clauses of the Family Compact and that she should negotiate with Spain to transform this alliance into a National Compact. When Count Floridablanca realized that otherwise France would not assist Spain in offensive operations against England, being unwilling to alter the Compact of the Bourbon Monarchs, he decided that it would be useless to prolong the negotiations about Nootka Sound.

Hence in October, 1790, an agreement was reached between England and Spain which promised the parties injured at Nootka Sound restitution and indemnification, and which provided that the English were to be confirmed in the right to fish in the Pacific Ocean at ten marine miles from the coast, but that they were to be prohibited from engaging in contraband trade with the Spanish colonies. The Nootka Sound Convention also stipulated that in case of its infringement the contracting parties would adjust the ensuing dispute in an amicable manner.⁵²

To the world this treaty was important, for it signified an irremediable breach in Spain's monopolistic policy. The eastern Pacific was no longer a Spanish Ocean. Miranda, however, stigmatized this convention as futile. In a letter to Henry Knox he declared that it would never compensate England for

⁵² Manning, "The Nootka Sound Controversy," *Am. Hist. Assn. Rept.*, 1905, pp. 454-56.

the immense advantages which she would have gained by a war with Spain.⁵³ An attaché of the Russian legation vividly described how the disgruntled promoter vented his spleen:

“‘I admit that I am beaten,’ he exclaimed with emotion; ‘I would not have believed that human perversity could have gone thus far; I have learned of things which make me shudder and which Count Woronzow would never have suspected! Pitt is a monster who seems to have no other guide than Machiavelli’s *Prince*.’ Then in a calmer tone, ‘I am sold,’ he said to me, ‘by a treaty of commerce with Spain.’”⁵⁴

Even before the treaty had been signed Miranda had been cogitating about the financial remuneration that England ought to grant him. On July 26, 1790, the ex-governor cautioned him to “do nothing” which would give the Prime Minister “the most distant suspicion” that he had “any view to money.”⁵⁵ During the next month Pownall sent a letter to Miranda which contains these interpretative passages:

“When I first engaged my mind in this business,—it was from an anxious wish I have long had to see an oppressed honest part of Mankind restored to their rights which they had been robbed of: and at the same time to make the doing of this to obtain for my own Country a sweet and just revenge, for the treachery she had been injured by—but when in the course of this I was led to know you and your worth and merit, I have become anxiously interested for everything that concerns you personally. * * * If on trying the ground with —— you perceive nothing of this kind can be made practicable,—you have nothing left to do but to go *directly* to your Great and Generous Friend and explain to her with disguise without reserve, the Reasons which have detained you so long in England.”⁵⁶

As this confidential epistle indicates, Miranda had been contemplating a trip to St. Petersburg, perhaps with the design

⁵³ April 5, 1791, Knox MSS., vol. 28, f. 8.

⁵⁴ Bartenev, *Archiv knjaza Voroncova*, XXX, 294.

⁵⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 18. ⁵⁶ With postscript dated Aug. 21, 1790, *ibid*.

of entering the Russian service. It also suggests that meantime he may have been receiving financial assistance from the Czarina. When he heard of the melancholy death of Prince Potemkin, the ex-governor expressed keen regret that Miranda had been prevented from going to St. Petersburg "by a trumpery negotiation in this Country."⁵⁷

On August 21, 1790, Pownall sent a letter that we quote at length as it contains counsel which perhaps affected Miranda's management of his financial affairs:

"I have been in situations similar to those in which you find yourself at present—I can therefore, and I do, enter into all your feelings and perfectly coincide in your reasoning upon them. You both feel right and reason right, when you say that you will not in any form accept any pecuniary offer, if it is not upon some plan of engaging your services; Yet remember you have in View a Great Point, and I hope you will never lose sight of that point. That must at all times be your first Object. Do not therefore sacrifice that to any feelings whatsoever. Do not putt yourself in any circumstances of Distress, which may render you incapable, at any future time, of taking again the same measure; Do not make any quarrel with the only power (taking all in all) that can ever take up your measure and putt it into execution. * * *

"And if they knew you as I do, they might engage your services to be carrying such measures on. If I was Minister I would engage your Services, and send you to N. A. where you might prepare both the People and Things for the liberating Mexico—And I wd. do this not by a Sum of Money—but by a regular salary—A small one would enable you to do great things in that Country—I could find other ways of employing such services as you are able to perform—honorable to you and beneficial to them, but if they have no further nor more extended plans but for the momentary event of a Warr which yet they are endeavoring to avoid, they are unworthy your Services. However, I end my advice as I began. Remember, your Grand Point must be your first, your last, your sole

⁵⁷ Nov. 13, 1791, *ibid.*, vol. 19.

But and your fixed Line of Conduct—So in that View; However you despise Money—and Worse than Despise, as even to be offended with the Person who offers it; Take it, rather than putt yourself in any Situation that may disable you to pursue Your Point. * * * I would, old as I am, not despair of living to see you at the Head of Mexico; and from thence going to the liberating the Greatest Part of your poor oppressed Country Men—Try then if the Person you are now in treaty with will settle such a *moderate* annuity on you as shall enable you to go and live in N.— Am.”⁵⁸

A few lines in Miranda's disjointed diary indicate, however, that in November, 1790, he was warned that an employee of the English Treasury had engaged spies to watch his movements.⁵⁹ With the object of securing a financial settlement the revolutionary solicited an interview with Pitt in December, 1790, but was informed that the Minister was about to depart from London.⁶⁰ In a letter dated January 28, 1791, Miranda formulated his views regarding their future relations. He stated that his “only views now, and always were, to promote the happiness and prosperity of my own country (South America) excessively oppressed—and in so doing, to offer also great commercial advantages to England, as stated in the proposal presented on the 5th of March, 1790.” With regard to terms he stated that he was willing to enter into “judicious arrangements” which might “bring to maturity, in a future period, the same generous and benevolent plan . . . for the happiness and prosperity of South America; for the grandeur and opulence” of England.

In the only proposal in which he ever hinted at territorial cessions to a European nation in Spanish America, Miranda suggested that some of the exiled Jesuits “might be of very great service; both for the purpose of directing the new settlements and commercial intercourse to be formed between the English and the natives upon the granted coasts of South

⁵⁸ Mir. MSS., vol. 18.

⁵⁹ Nov. 3, 1790, *ibid.*, vol. 19.

⁶⁰ Smith to Miranda, Dec. 27, 1790, *ibid.*, vol. 18.

America, and for establishing some communications with the great Spanish towns on that continent, by means of their own relations and friends." He then raised the question whether the English Government could grant him financial aid, and declared that his mention of the grant of "a competent annual support" was due to his "personal situation," as he was prevented from securing "any income from Caracas.—Any sums of money that may be granted to me, on any account whatsoever, either for services done, or expected hereafter; shall be repaid by me, at the time I may come to the possession of my property in South America." Then he went on to say, "It is expected, that the intention being purely *patriotic*, with the view only of offering services to my country, and promoting the interests and advantages of Great Britain, as perfectly compatible; services should not be requested from me against Spain, with any other motive—being a point of delicacy in me; though authorized by the rights of nations, and the example of great and virtuous men in modern and ancient times." ⁶¹

To judge by Miranda's assertions as well as by later events, the Prime Minister assured him that his projects would be given consideration in case of a war between England and Spain. Yet the query about the remuneration to which the revolutionary should be entitled was not promptly answered. On May 5, 1791, Joseph Smith wrote a note to him from Downing Street that read as follows: "Will you do me the favor to call here tomorrow mornng. at eleven, and Mr. Pitt will take an opportunity of seeing you." ⁶² Disappointed in his hopes of a prompt adjustment, during that month Miranda again presented his financial needs to Turnbull's consideration. ⁶³ On June 17 he again brought to Pitt's attention the inquiry concerning the sum which he should be paid. ⁶⁴ Not having received any response to his "pressing request," six days later he again wrote to Pitt to declare that "absolute

⁶¹ Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, pp. 220-21.

⁶² Mir. MSS., vol. 19. ⁶³ May 17, 1791, *ibid.*, vol. 22. ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 19.

necessity" impelled him to desire an immediate financial adjustment.⁶⁵ On July 6 he addressed to Smith a letter which ran thus: "Pray tell me if you have received any response concerning my two letters of the past month. If you have nothing to communicate, I shall feel compelled to proceed to Downing Street tomorrow to gain possession of my papers, and to put an end to all correspondence whatever with the only person whom I have believed to be infallible in his promises and worthy of the great confidence which formed the basis of our intimate relations."⁶⁶

On July 10, 1791, the Prime Minister sent the impecunious promoter five hundred pounds. Perhaps Pitt also promised to conclude other financial arrangements with him.⁶⁷ Nine days later Miranda announced to Smith that he expected soon to sail with Turnbull on an excursion to the Isle of Wight and that he intended to view the English fleet at Spithead. On August 19 Miranda wrote to Pitt to remind him of the alleged promise to adjust "his affairs" and to state that "after so many delays" it would be "very inconvenient" for him "to wait longer."⁶⁸ Still more insistent, on September 8, 1791, the petitioner solicited the Minister to pay five hundred pounds which he considered were still due him; he also asked that a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year should be settled upon him by the English Government as a loan to pay his living expenses in London.⁶⁹ Fortunately for a better understanding of this delicate affair Miranda preserved Pitt's reply. It is the only available letter expressing the Minister's views regarding the revolutionary promoter.

"I received the day before yesterday your Letter of the 8th inst., in answer to which I must inform you that I cannot entertain the smallest Idea of recommending you for a Pension to the Amount which you mention.

"The giving you any fixed annual allowance was only thought of in Case it should appear upon Consideration that

⁶⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 19.

⁶⁶ Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 45.

⁶⁷ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 714-15.

⁶⁸ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 714-15.

your Continuance here, or your being employed might be useful to the Public Service. If otherwise all that you had any reason given you to expect, was a reasonable Sum in proportion to your necessary Expences and to the Inconvenience or Loss of Time occasioned by your Stay here. On this Ground £500 was by my direction paid you by Mr. Smith.

"I certainly do not recollect having ever told you that you should receive £1000, nor have I understood from Mr. Smith, that you stated any such Expectation when the sum of £500 was paid you. It will be necessary, however, as so much of the Communication with you passed thro' Mr. Smith, that I should refer to Him before I form a final Decision.

"I shall probably receive his Answer before I return to Town, which will be in the Beginning of Next Month, and you shall then be informed what further you may have to expect. Under these Circumstances I imagine you will think it more convenient to defer your Journey."⁷⁰

To this challenge Miranda framed a reply on September 18, 1791. He announced that the only recourse left him was to ask for his valuable papers, plans, and memoirs which seemed to have been mislaid or lost. In what the Minister may have regarded as a brazen manner he added: "I hope that all of them will be returned to me without a copy, a translation, or anything being retained." Miranda affirmed that he did not entertain the slightest idea of remaining in England on any other terms than those which he had proposed. He declared that if two thousand pounds were paid him, he would be poorly remunerated for his delay and expense. He asked to be informed exactly when his papers would be returned so that he might set the date of his departure from London.⁷¹ Tired of waiting for a response, six months later Miranda addressed another letter to the Prime Minister, to acknowledge the receipt of thirteen hundred pounds from him, and again to solicit the return of his priceless manuscripts. Rightly did he declare that it was beyond his power to furnish complete proof

⁷⁰ Sept. 12, 1791; Mir. MSS., vol. 45; cf. Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, II, 23.

⁷¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

of what had passed between himself and Pitt in confidential interviews. Whether or not Miranda actually sent this epistle to the great Minister, it thus presents his side of the dispute:

“Yet do you believe, Sir, that it is just or reasonable for you to appropriate what belongs to another, and to fail in the engagements and promises that you made in the name of your nation? For it is the English nation that I addressed through your ministry, in order to communicate plans worthy of her which I would never think of doing through the honorable Mr. Pitt. And perhaps you think that when I leave this country you can use my projects as you like. No, Sir, you ought never to forget that all the ideas embodied in these plans were expressly communicated to you in order to promote the liberty and happiness of the Spanish-American people and the welfare and honor of England as objects that were entirely compatible with each other. Yet, should you be inclined to use these projects in any other manner be convinced that my compatriots do not lack the means to thwart your sinister views. Your secretary, Mr. Smith, sent me the other day four papers of the ten which I had the honor of confiding to you and told me that the others could not be found. Sir! papers transferred personally to the Prime Minister of Great Britain and judged by him to be of great national importance,—lost! Allow me to refrain from making the reflections provoked by these peculiar circumstances. * * * Money has never been the object of my endeavors as you should be convinced by the refusal that I have made of those employments and dignities which the greatest and most magnanimous Sovereign in the world has been so good as to offer me in her service for the execution of an object that surpasses any personal interest.”⁷²

Such seems to have been Miranda's parting fusillade. Though we can do little more than speculate about Pitt's precise object with regard to the Spanish Indies, yet we can be sure that some prominent Englishman of this era cherished other designs than those of liberation and commercial conquest. Had England become involved in war with Spain in

⁷² Mar. 19, 1792, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

1790 it would have been strange if her doughty seamen had stopped short of the occupation of portions of the Spanish Empire in America. Curious though it may seem, the negotiations,—if such we may style them,—between Miranda and Pitt were not brought to the attention of the Duke of Leeds. In English official circles a knowledge of these transactions apparently did not pass far beyond the Prime Minister, his secretary, and Secretary Grenville. Yet this need not occasion surprise; for, in dealings with the South American, Pitt merely followed his custom during a crisis of taking the management of certain matters into his own hands.

Whatever may have been Pitt's intentions, it is clear that because of the liaison of 1790 Miranda wished to draw a regular financial compensation from England in return for services pertaining to the emancipation of the Spanish-American colonies. Either because the promoter made demands for remuneration which the Prime Minister considered excessive or because of a misunderstanding about the financial settlements that should have been made, their relations ended in mutual dissatisfaction. It was not without significance that this fiasco took place at the very juncture when the drama of the French Revolution was being unrolled. That thrilling spectacle attracted the attention of the observant Venezuelian, who in an undated memorandum recorded the singular fact that while on a visit to the House of Commons he saw placed on sale there with sandwiches the second part of Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*.

Chapter VI

IN THE FRENCH MILITARY SERVICE

CONDITIONS ON the Continent had radically changed since 1789. The Ancient Régime in France was being ruthlessly undermined. A Constituent Assembly had adopted a Constitution that transferred power from the King to a National Assembly. Louis XVI had taken the contradictory title of "King of the French by the grace of God and the constitutional laws of the State." The revolution was becoming a movement for liberty, equality, and fraternity,—a crusade which was to impel the genius of Pitt to create one coalition of powers after another in an attempt to cope with the victorious armies of France. In a contemporary memorandum Miranda recorded that in the spring of 1792 he decided to cross the Channel in order to discover whether French leaders were contemplating the extension of their system of liberty to the Spanish Indies. It appears that he planned only a brief sojourn in Paris; for he packed his books in boxes, placed a case full of manuscripts in the custody of the Russian Ambassador in London, and took with him only a few of his most valuable papers.

An entry in his disjointed diary informs us that Miranda paid four and one-half guineas for his trip from London to Paris, including the cost of meals and the voyage across the Channel. He left Picadilly at 5:30 A.M. on March 19, 1792, in company with four other travelers. He arrived at Paris in a diligence on March 23, 1792, at 2:30 P.M., and secured accommodations in the Hotel de Deux Écues, Rue de Tour. For several weeks he did little besides view the sights of the gay and distracted French capital. Among other places of interest he visited the royal library, the dungeons of Vincennes, and the atelier of Houdon.¹ Through letters of introduction he soon became acquainted with leaders of the domi-

¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 20. Cf. Parra-Pérez, *Miranda et la révolution française*, pp. lvi-lvii.

nant Girondist party. Among others he met the ambitious politician, Brissot de Warville; Jean S. Bailly, the eminent astronomer and ex-mayor of Paris; Jean M. Roland, minister of the interior; and the minister of foreign affairs, General Dumouriez, who was destined to become the commander in chief of the French army in Belgium. Jerome Pétion, mayor of Paris, later avowed that he recognized in Miranda "a man who had meditated about the principles of government and who appeared to be strongly attached to liberty, a veritable sage." He added that Miranda had "served with distinction in the New World when the Americans shed their blood for independence."²

Meantime the ministers induced the hapless King to propose a declaration of war against Austria. Yet Louis XVI firmly opposed certain measures of the Girondists. On June 13, 1792, he dismissed his ministers. In the following month Prussia, the ally of Austria, declared war on France; and the commander of the Prussian army threatened that the Paris populace would be punished if it injured the King and Queen. On the night of August 9 revolutionists overturned the communal government of Paris, the Marseillais led them into the Tuileries Palace, while the royal family was compelled to take refuge with the Assembly. The legislature then declared that the King was to be suspended from his functions. It vested the executive power in a council headed by Danton, and decided that deputies should be chosen to a convention which should frame a new constitution.

Under date of August 11 Miranda inscribed in his journal the following paragraphs concerning his relations with the Parisian Mayor:

"My friend M. Pétion asked me why I did not enter the service of France in the cause of that liberty which I loved so well. He said that she would give me a lucrative post and that I would be able to render her essential aid. I pointed out to him

² Pétion, *Réponse très-succincte*, p. 9.

that I was an alien and spoke of the ingratitude which a foreign soldier sometimes experienced after such service, as I had witnessed in America. I also mentioned the great advantages that I should lose in America and Russia. * * *

"On August 22 my friend the Mayor told me that he had arranged my affair and that Servan, the new minister of war, had promised to employ me as major general in the armies of France, if I would accept the post. I responded that such a position in the service of liberty would please me, but that I wished an assurance that I would enjoy the same salary after the war had terminated; for I would have relinquished all my other resources. On August 23 we dined together at the home of Pétion. There Servan spoke to me with interest about the matter: he made the same proposition and offered me his friendship, but demonstrated that it was impossible for the French ministers to give me a positive assurance regarding my treatment after the war; for this guarantee did not depend upon them,—their very existence at that juncture was a hazard. Nevertheless he said that if liberty triumphed, France could never forget those foreigners who had generously engaged in her service under such circumstances. * * * I thanked him and asked for a short time in which to consider my decision." ⁸

On August 24, 1792, Miranda drew up a paper that he designed to submit to Servan. In this memorial he wrote that he had become convinced of the justice with which France was defending her sovereignty and of the glory which would be acquired by the soldiers who fought under her banner "for the support of liberty,—the sole source of human felicity." He declared that he would pledge himself to serve the French nation faithfully on three conditions: that he should be given the grade and salary of major general, that upon the termination of the war he should be appointed to a civil or military position which would furnish him with sufficient income so that he might live comfortably in France, and that his project for the liberation of the Spanish-American colonists should

⁸ Mir. MSS., vol. 27.

be given due consideration. He maintained that by their commerce those people offered a great market for French goods. "It is necessary that their cause should be effectively protected by France as being the cause of liberty," argued Miranda, "and that she should give me permission, as soon as occasion offers, to promote their welfare by establishing the liberty and independence of their country,—a duty which I have voluntarily assumed, and one in which England and the United States have promised me their support on the first favorable occasion."⁴

Evidently the memorialist thought that when the cause of liberty triumphed in France he would attain the pinnacle of his ambition by insuring liberty and independence to his native land. According to his journal, on August 25 he dined in Rue Royale with Servan and the physicist, Gaspard Monge, who was minister of the navy. At that dinner, said Miranda, an understanding was reached: "I agreed to serve the cause of liberty with all my might; while they agreed, in the name of France, to support me and to employ me even after the war had terminated in preference to French officers, because under the existing circumstances, as I was a foreigner, my engagement was more deserving."⁵ In an explanatory postscript adjoined to a copy of a note that he addressed to Servan on August 25 Miranda thus reiterated the terms of the agreement: "It is expressly on this condition of preferential treatment that I engage in the service of emancipated France. A guarantee to that effect on behalf of the representative government has been assured me by Ministers Servan, Roland, Lebrun, and Clavière, as well as by Pétion, the patriot mayor of Paris." Further, he stated that these leaders had promised, "in case of need to make this agreement known to all the world."⁶ Then Miranda went to the Tuileries, he said, to reflect upon the transaction that had transformed him from an idle spectator of stirring scenes into a French general. His motives were elucidated in a letter of August 30 to Woronzow.

⁴ *Ibid.*⁵ *Ibid.*⁶ *Ibid.*

"At the very time when I expected to see you and to converse with you about the affairs of Europe, I have become a general in the French army of liberty and am about to leave to take charge of a division on the frontiers. It should not astonish you to see me united with the defenders of liberty, for you know that she is my favorite divinity and that I was devoted to her service before France became interested in her. * * * What has most strongly influenced me to accept this post is the hope of some day being useful to my poor Fatherland that I can never abandon. * * * Present my sincere compliments to our friend, General Clark, who will perhaps consider it scandalous that a former Castilian has become a sans-culotte." ⁷

This appointment was granted him in the mistaken belief that he had held a similar post in the American Revolution. A letter dated September 1, 1792, signed by Servan and Lebrun, stated that by action of the Executive Council, Miranda, formerly a brigadier general in America, had been brevetted major general in the army of France. Three days later, in the name of the nation, the Provisional Executive Council announced that he had been appointed general in the Army of the North under Dumouriez in the belief that he would justify the opinion that it had formed of "his patriotism and military talents." ⁸ Meantime Miranda had been employed in securing a general's uniform and in composing his testament. In this document, which was dated August 31, he provided that a Parisian merchant named Tissot, with whom he had been lodging, should serve as his executor. To Pitt's secretary he left a large box containing five pictures. To John Turnbull he bequeathed a collection of books and engravings. The bequests to Turnbull were made on the condition, however, that the Englishman should pay certain debts of the testator amounting to a considerable sum. ⁹

⁷ Parra-Pérez, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19. An unsigned miniature in the possession of Count Costa of Milan, a descendant of Miranda, depicts him as a sans-culotte.

⁸ Mir. MSS., vol. 27; Miranda, *Indice del archivo*, p. xiii.

⁹ Robertson, "Miranda's Testamentary Dispositions," in *His. Am. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 281.

Under date of September 5 Miranda wrote an informing passage in his diary. "This morning M. Servan sent me instructions that I should serve in the Army of the North under Dumouriez where I had requested to be stationed."¹⁰ After a visit to the Jacobin Club, where he noticed the Duke of Orleans sitting amidst the populace, Miranda left Paris for Grand Pré by way of Soissons. A passport granted him by the Executive Council informed public officials in the departments that Francisco de Miranda had "brown hair and eyebrows, and a round, smooth-shaven face. He has grey eyes, a large nose, a medium-sized mouth, a round chin, a high forehead, and a small scar on the lower left cheek near the chin. A major general in the Army of the North, he is on his way to that army; and you must let him proceed to it without any hindrance."¹¹

At his lodgings General Miranda left instructions that when his baggage arrived from London, it should be forwarded to the Army of the North.¹² On the evening of September 11 the new general reached the camp of Dumouriez, the domineering and intriguing French commander, who received him, said Miranda in his diary, with friendship and distinction. Dumouriez placed him in charge of a division of the right wing of the army that soon engaged in a skirmish with the Prussian invaders. On September 20, 1792, he witnessed the check given to the Prussians under the Duke of Brunswick on the hill of Valmy. Four days later Pétion, president of the National Convention, sent a letter to the new recruit to express pleasure at the news he had received "that Colonel Miranda had borne himself as an experienced officer and as an excellent citizen who knew how to merit the confidence of the soldiers he commanded. This is not simply a matter of ensuring the triumph of the liberty of France," added Pétion, "but of the liberty of the entire world. We shall never fight for a greater or for a more noble cause. Bear yourself well; we

¹⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 27. ¹¹ Sept. 6, 1792, A. N., F⁷, 7112, dossier B, 7190.

¹² Miranda to Tissot, Sept. 3, 1792, Mir. MSS., vol. 19.

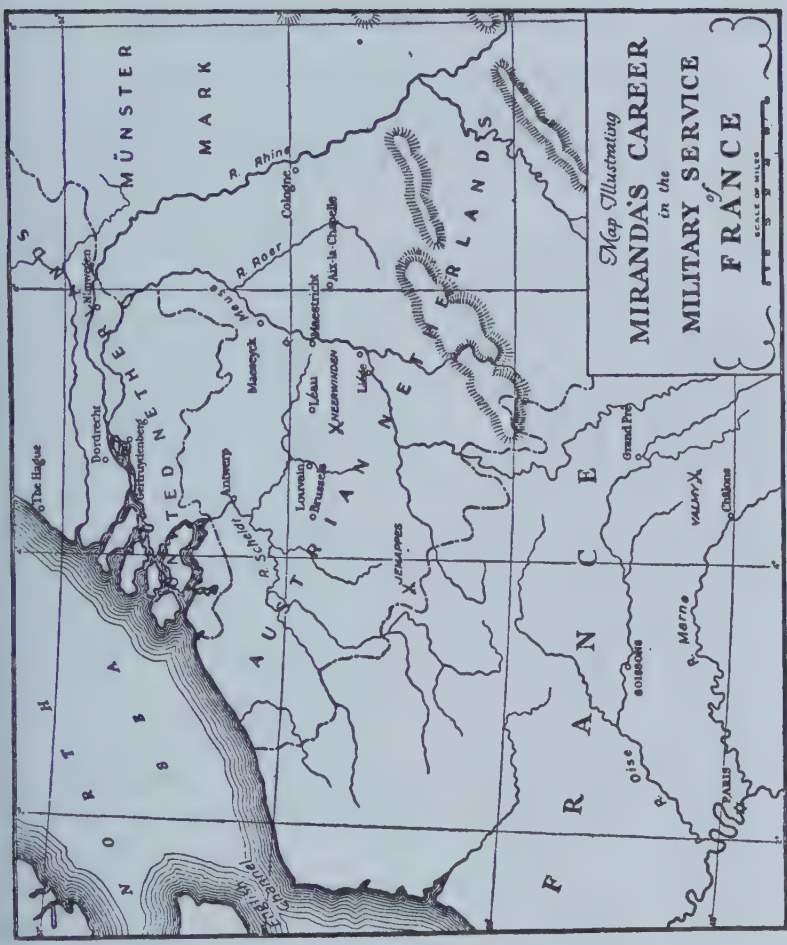
shall embrace after the victory.”¹³ An intimate friendship soon developed between Miranda and his commander. In one of his letters Dumouriez wrote as follows to the South American: “Your friendship, my dear Miranda, is my most precious recompense. * * * It is your sublime philosophy that binds us together.”¹⁴

Installed on September 21, by its first decree the Convention declared that monarchy was abolished in France. It furthively designated the new State a Republic. Girondist leaders had meantime sketched a foreign policy that involved an attack on the dominions of Spain. Brissot selected Miranda as the best commander for an expedition against the Spanish Indies. Upon becoming acquainted with that scheme Miranda fondly dreamed of enlisting support for it in the United States.

He held conferences on the subject with his crony, Colonel W. S. Smith, who was now on a visit to France. On November 4 he wrote letters to Secretaries Knox and Hamilton about the emancipation of Spanish America. In sanguine phrases he said to Knox: “You will see by the official communications of the new appointed minister of France, and the information our friend Col. Smith will give you, how things are coming to maturity; and the Period advancing when our dear Country America shall become that glorious part of the Globe, that nature intended her to be—and that those schemes our patriotism suggested to our minds in our Semposiums at Boston, are not far from being realized.” In a similar strain Miranda wrote to Hamilton: “The affairs and success of France take a happy turn in our favor. I mean in favor of our dear country America, from the North to the South—the official communications from the new appointed Minister of France and the information our friend Col. Smith shall give to you will

¹³ Clavery, “L’anniversaire de Valmy; une lettre de Pétion à Miranda,” in *Journal des Débats*, Sept. 21, 1928. See further, Clavery and Parra-Pérez, “À propos de Miranda,” in *ibid.*, Sept. 29, 1928.

¹⁴ Oct. 10, 1792, Mir. MSS., vol. 27. On Miranda’s early relations with Dumouriez, see also Parra-Pérez, *Miranda et la révolution française*, p. 26.



Map Illustrating
MIRANDA'S CAREER
in the
MILITARY SERVICE
of
FRANCE

SCALE OF MILES
0 10 20 30 40

show you how things are grown ripe into maturity for the Execution of those grand and beneficial projects we had in Contemplation when in our Conversation at New York the love of our Country exalted our minds with those Ideas, for the sake of unfortunate Colombia.”¹⁵

In a postscript to his letter to Knox the general directed that he should be addressed in care of the French Department of Foreign Affairs. At this juncture Miranda conferred with Lebrun, the foreign minister, about the project to revolutionize Spanish America.¹⁶ He took steps to transfer his books and manuscripts to Paris. Turnbull wrote from London on November 20, 1792, that Andrew Fröberg, who had returned from a visit to Sweden, was packing his master's books for shipment to France and would bring with him the “Box of Papers from Count Woronzow.”¹⁷ On November 25 Monge wrote to the Minister of War and expressed the opinion that Miranda ought to replace Thowenot in a projected expedition to the French West Indies. Two days later Monge informed this Minister that he had requested of Dumouriez that Miranda should be appointed governor of the French portion of Santo Domingo.¹⁸ Further, on November 26 Brissot wrote to Servan and maintained that there would be no peace for France while a Bourbon remained upon the throne. “Fully convinced that it is necessary to attack Spain in all her vulnerable parts, I believe that it is necessary to foment a revolution in Spanish America and that there is no man better fitted for this rôle than Miranda.” Then Brissot added that with “his courage and genius the chains forged by Cortés and Pizarro will easily be broken.”¹⁹

A letter from Brissot to Dumouriez dated November 28, 1792, presents in circumstantial detail the significant project to employ the Venezuelan to cut the Spanish colonies adrift from the Motherland:

¹⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 45; Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 290-91.

¹⁶ Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution française*, III, 157.

¹⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 20. ¹⁸ A. G., armées du Nord et des Ardennes, Nov., 1792.

¹⁹ Brissot, *Correspondance et papiers*, p. 312.

"It is necessary to promote this revolution in Spain and in America at the same time. The fate of the movement in Spanish America depends upon one man: you know him, you esteem him, you love him,—that is Miranda! The ministers have recently been searching for some one to replace Desparbès at Santo Domingo. A ray of light struck me. I said: 'appoint Miranda.' Miranda will soon put an end to the miserable quarrels of the colonists, he will soon bring the turbulent whites to reason, and he will become the idol of the colored people.

"Then with what ease will he not be able to revolutionize the colonies that the Spaniards possess in the West Indies or on the American Continent? At the head of twelve thousand troops of the line now at Santo Domingo and of ten or fifteen thousand brave mulattoes that our colonies will furnish, with what facility will he not be able to invade the Spanish dominions, having also a squadron under his orders, while the Spaniards have no forces with which to oppose him? The very name of Miranda will be worth an army: his talents, his courage, his genius,—all promise success! In order to insure this, however, there is not a moment to lose. It is necessary that he should depart on the *Capricieuse* which sails for Santo Domingo. It is necessary that he should depart before Spain can divine our intentions. I know well that his appointment will strike Spain with terror and will confound Pitt with his poor, dilatory politics; but Spain is impotent, and England will not budge. Let us always advance, but let us be just and generous. * * * My friend, do not let us consume our time with plans for an alliance with Prussian or England,—wretched scaffoldings as they are:—all these will have to go! *Novus rerum nascitur ordo.*"²⁰

Dumouriez was apparently charmed with this grand design. On November 30, 1792, he wrote to Lebrun to declare that the control of the Dutch navy and the coöperation of the United States "in the execution of a superb plan of General Miranda" would enable France to crush England.²¹ On December 13 Brissot wrote to Miranda and sketched his plan:

²⁰ Rojas, *Miranda dans la révolution française*, pp. 2-4.

²¹ Sorel, III, 175.

he proposed that the island of Santo Domingo should be used as a base of operations and suggested that an army of ten or twelve thousand men at this island should be strengthened by eight or ten thousand mulatto soldiers who could be recruited in the French West Indies. He maintained that these forces could be increased by a large number of volunteers from the United States who were pining to engage in the enterprise. To quote briefly from this letter:

“Your name and your talents promise success. I have presented my plan to all the ministers; and they have recognized its advantages. They have consented to give you the vacant post as governor of Santo Domingo. From that island as a base you can direct this insurrection. A single consideration has arrested me, namely, the deep attachment which you have formed for Dumouriez. I know how close to his heart is this revolution in the New World.”²²

Yet in Miranda’s response to Brissot he admitted that his enthusiasm was not at white heat:

“The plan outlined in your letter is really great and magnificent, but I do not know whether its execution would be certain or even probable. With whatsoever concerns the Hispanic-American Continent or its islands I am perfectly acquainted and in a position to form an accurate opinion. With respect to the French islands and their actual situation, however, I know scarcely anything and in consequence it is impossible for me to form a just opinion about them. As in your plan they are the base of all operations,—for the French colonies are to furnish the active force to set into motion the people of the adjacent Continent,—it is necessary that we should be very certain that this movement would actually take place. It also appears to me that my appointment and my departure for Santo Domingo would be the signal of alarm for the courts of Madrid and London and that the results would soon be seen at Cadiz and Portsmouth. This activity would

²² Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 8. The original of this letter that is preserved with related correspondence in the Mir. MSS., vol. 29, bears the date Dec. 13 instead of Oct. 13 as printed by Rojas.

put new obstacles in the way of an enterprise that is too great, too beautiful, and too interesting to spoil at the very beginning by a lack of foresight.”²³

In a postscript Miranda declared that the papers containing his proposals to Pitt in 1790 were in Pétion's hands. He suggested that perhaps it might be wise to examine them before perfecting the great project which Brissot had outlined. There is a likelihood that, as Miranda later asserted, his reluctance to undertake the emancipation of Spanish America with a strong French force was partly due to his apprehensions about the anarchic principles that he supposed were now spreading in France.²⁴ In any case, because of Miranda's activities in the Austrian Netherlands, early in 1793 Monge relinquished the project of sending him to Santo Domingo.

Miranda had meantime risen rapidly in the French service. Early in October, 1792, he had been brevetted lieutenant general in the Army of the North. This recognition he designated as “an inestimable honor,” and declared that his satisfaction would be still greater if “his talents could equal the zeal and the inviolable love of liberty that attached him firmly to the French Republic.”²⁵ On October 24 he was placed at the head of eight brigades of the left wing of the army. A visit to Paris prevented him from participating in the defeat of the Austrians at Jemappes, a victory which gave the French a dominant position in the Austrian Netherlands. On November 26 Miranda replaced Labourdonnaye and became general in command of a division. He vigorously pushed the siege of Antwerp that capitulated on November 29. He promptly issued an order to his soldiers that when they entered its fortress “the

²³ Rojas, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

²⁴ Miranda to Gual, Oct. 4, 1799, Mir. MSS., vol. 46; *Ed. Rev.*, XIII, 288. Among the annotations on Miranda's copy of his petition to Pitt dated Mar. 13, 1799, is the following: “Par suite de l'arrangement antérieur il entre au Service de la France—et fut nommé en Nov^r. 1792, gouverneur General de St. Domingue pour l'exécution de ce Projet; mais le système de Robespierre étant survenu, il fait remettre l'entreprise à un tems plus favorable.” Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

²⁵ Miranda to Servan, Oct. 9, 1792, A. G., archives administratives, dossier Miranda.

emblems of despotism were to be replaced by the emblems of liberty." Names of Spanish heroes engraved on its bastions should be replaced by the names of Dumouriez, Pétion, Helvius, and Rousseau.²⁶

Miranda's successes provoked the jealousy of his American acquaintance, Eustace, who was now in the French service. He wrote a letter to General Labourdonnaye and described the Venezuelan as a "so-called Count of Peru, a base Spanish deserter, a vile contrabandist, and a notorious adventurer," who had attained a distinguished grade in the French army after a few weeks of service "by adroitly paying court to our general and his favorite."²⁷ However Miranda won the high regard of the Bishop of Antwerp who presented him with some Latin and Spanish classics as a token of "the homage due to the man of letters, the philosopher full of charm and extensive knowledge, the great military character of whom Homer and Horace, after him, would have said: *Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes*."²⁸

On December 6, 1792, General Miranda left Antwerp to join the advance guard of the French army at Maeseyck-sur-Meuse. A few days later his division entered Ruremond. January 21, 1793,—the day on which Louis XVI was executed and which thus marked the beginning of a relentless war between republican France and monarchical Europe,—found Miranda in charge of the army that had been under the command of General Valence. On February 11 he announced to Beurnonville, the new minister of war, that he had captured Stevensweert, which controlled the river Meuse. As commander in chief of the French army during the absence of Dumouriez, from Liège on February 13 Miranda formally announced to his comrades in arms that France had not only declared war against the United Netherlands but also against England, which had assumed a belligerent attitude because of the French

²⁶ *Moniteur*, Dec. 3, 1792.

²⁷ Eustace, *Le citoyen des États-Unis d'Amérique*, p. 20.

²⁸ Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, p. 217.

conquest of the Austrian Netherlands. This Gallic declaration of war impelled England to form during the next six months the imposing fabric of the First Coalition composed, among other continental powers, of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Spain.

In a dispatch to Beurnonville on February 12 Miranda revealed his own character by expressing the opinion that to insure success in Holland the French would have to foment a revolution there. Dumouriez soon assured Miranda that this would be done. Audaciously did he plan to divide his army, to mask six Dutch fortresses, to cross the estuaries of the Meuse and the Rhine, and to march rapidly to Amsterdam. Meantime he ordered Miranda to undertake the siege of Maestricht.²⁹

A plan for the investment of that city which General Miranda had formed at the instance of Dumouriez was approved by the Minister of War. Miranda proposed that after the capture of Maestricht, he and Dumouriez should unite forces and drive the enemy out of the province of Utrecht. The impetuous Dumouriez invaded the United Netherlands on February 17 and captured three fortresses but was halted at Dordrecht. In high spirits, trusting that his favorite lieutenant was winning success in the execution of another part of the ambitious design, the commander in chief sent the following greetings to Miranda on February 26: "Stretch out your arms as far as you can in order that we may re-unite at Nimwegen and dance the Carmagnole together. * * * Adieu, my dear comrade, make a good fire, drink your wine freely, bear yourself well, and be gay."³⁰ When he notified Miranda of the capture of Gertruydenberg, he addressed him as a "proud republican, my friend, my brother."³¹

Yet Dumouriez's republican brother could not make a serious breach in the defenses of Maestricht, although he reported on February 25, 1793, that the city was on fire in five

²⁹ Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 296-97.

³⁰ Rojas, *Miranda dans la révolution française*, pp. 82, 83. ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.



*Francisco de Miranda. Painting by Jean Lebarbier.
Engraving by Charles E. Gaucher. In the collection
of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.*

places. Miranda's summons to capitulate, the Dutch disdained. Unexpectedly the French army under General Valence that covered the siege was driven from the Roer River through Aix-la-Chapelle by Austrian soldiers commanded by the Duke of Coburg. In despondent terms Valence then wrote to Dumouriez to declare that their dream about the conquest of Holland had ended. Instead of triumphantly joining his commander at Nimwegen, Miranda was forced to raise the siege of Maastricht. A few days later the Executive Council ordered Dumouriez to return to Belgium, where he rejoined the main French army. On March 16 his advance guard attacked the imperial soldiers and forced them to retire toward the village of Neerwinden.

There Dumouriez found the Austrians strongly stationed on a plateau which stretched north from Neerwinden to Léau. The French commander surprised the enemy by suddenly taking the initiative; he threw large forces under General Valence against the Austrian left. His left wing under Miranda was ordered to occupy Léau, while columns from his center were detached to attack Neerwinden and the dominating plateau. A decisive battle thus took place on March 18 between the French army under Dumouriez and Austrian soldiers under Archduke Charles. Despite gallant efforts the French failed to secure Neerwinden, the key to the Austrian position. A flank attack from the plateau by splendid, imperial troops had meantime caused the raw volunteers under Miranda to break and flee. Léau had to be evacuated, and the left wing of the French army was thrown into a disastrous flight.³²

The rout of Miranda's soldiers was at least partly responsible for the victory of the Austrians at Neerwinden. At once Dumouriez wrote to the Minister of War and asserted that the disastrous check was due in no small measure to Miranda's

³² Thiébauld, *Memoirs*, I, 157-58; Money, *The History of the Campaign of 1792*, pp. 274-84; Parra-Pérez, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-200. Maps of the battle of Neerwinden may be found in Antepara, *op. cit.*, p. 86, and Parra-Pérez, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

retreat. As a retort the discredited Venezuelan, who had gained an inkling of his commandant's plan to restore a constitutional monarchy to France, cleverly laid the blame for the loss of Belgium on Dumouriez. He denounced that general and maintained that he had traitorously proposed that they should lead the army against Paris.⁸³

However, General Miranda was not above suspicion. In accordance with the decision of commissioners of the National Convention in Belgium, who urged that complaints against his military conduct at Maestricht were so grave that he should be summoned to defend himself, on March 24, 1793, the National Convention ordered that this general should be arrested and brought before its bar. Upon his arrival at Paris, Miranda was thrust into the Conciergerie, the ancient Palace of Justice which had been converted into a prison. In that antechamber of the tomb he was detained with other suspects destined for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. His servant Andrew, who had just arrived in the capital, sent him some clothing and books for use during his incarceration, and informed him that his friends were seeking an advocate to defend him.⁸⁴

The deposed general did not tamely submit to disgrace. He composed a discourse justifying his military conduct which he proposed to deliver before the Convention. On April 4 he addressed its President to ask that he should be heard in his own defense. After Dumouriez had passed over to the enemies' camp, Miranda framed an indignant protest: he declared that his arrest had been ordered at a time when he was fighting the enemies of France, that his character had been defamed by a traitor, and that a perusal of his correspondence would demonstrate his innocence. In the iron style of the third person he wrote: "An irreproachable republican does not fear death, but he cannot endure being suspected of a crime,—after the lapse of more than a month, Miranda is still suspected!"⁸⁵

⁸³ Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 163. ⁸⁴ Fröberg to Miranda, undated, Mir. MSS., vol. 39.

⁸⁵ "Reflexions pour Miranda à ses juges," May, 1793, *ibid.*

In a summary of his military services to France the accused commander avowed that his animating motive was a "love of liberty which had been gained by a study of all the free people who enjoy it; my sole object has been to promote liberty among men, having served that cause in America." With regard to his conduct as a French general, he left these justificatory phrases: "Attack on Maestricht by order; my retreat approved; battle of Neerwinden against my judgment!"³⁶

After a preliminary examination by the Committee of War, on May 10 the general was arraigned for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. The public prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville, framed the charge against the prisoner which, in brief, accused him of having conspired with Dumouriez to commit treason. An Englishman named Christie who was connected with the firm of Turnbull and Forbes, wrote to Miranda and wisely implored him "to be as gentle as you can at the Tribune in blaming the Soldiers. I mean for your own sake. For the Mountain will take advantage of it."³⁷ In another letter this friend warned Miranda that Eustace was trying to do him all the harm he could.³⁸ An English political refugee named John Stone wrote to Miranda to offer his services, to declare that his heart bled at the indignities which the prisoner had been compelled to suffer, and to state that he was loath to call upon him lest this should provoke fresh suspicions.³⁹

On May 12 General Miranda was brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal which was presided over by J. B. Montané. Besides the jurors, there followed the prisoner into court a number of witnesses, and his counsel, Claude François Chauveau Lagarde. Attracted by the personality of the defendant, as well as by the heinous character of the accusation, Frenchmen and foreigners thronged the court. Among witnesses for the prosecution, General La Noue testified that the mistakes of the French at Liége were the fault of Valence. Delacroix, a member of a commission which the National Convention had

³⁶ "Discours Sommaire des Services à la Repu.," *ibid.*

³⁷ "Sunday," *ibid.*

³⁸ "Friday," *ibid.*

³⁹ Undated, *ibid.*

sent to Belgium, testified that after the battle of Neerwinden he had been informed that some of Miranda's soldiers did not see him for six days. Eustace, whose professed love for Miranda had turned into bitter hatred, openly avowed that he considered it an honor to detest the accused, whereupon Fouquier-Tinville promptly announced that his testimony could not be accepted.⁴⁰

The statements of some witnesses for the prosecution, as the accused trenchantly pointed out, were flimsy or contradictory in character. The English poetess, Helen Maria Williams, who was residing in Paris, recorded that Miranda "pleaded his cause with such sublime energy, as proved that his powers as an orator were not inferior to his talents as a general. He covered himself with glory and his enemies with confusion."⁴¹

Damaging statements made by witnesses for the prosecution were refuted by witnesses for the defense. Among the most pertinent of these were Stone, Sabonadière, Joel Barlow, and Thomas Paine. In a clever fashion they linked the accused general's activity in France to his known interest in human liberty. Stone testified that he had first met Miranda in England. "I have always found him the warmest friend and the most systematic defender of the rights of man. * * * I have this consolation in seeing him placed before the tribunal, namely, that it is insufficient that a French general should be acknowledged as not guilty, it is necessary that he should be recognized as being, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion."⁴² Sabonadière, an advocate who while an exile from France had been a teacher in England, gave similar testimony. "Brought into contact," he declared, "with many interesting personages of North America, I have often heard General Miranda, whom I do not know personally, mentioned as a good officer, a brave soldier, and a true friend of liberty."⁴³

⁴⁰ *Bulletin du tribunal criminel révolutionnaire*, no. 37, 2^{ème}. supplément.

⁴¹ *Letters containing a Sketch of the Politics of France*, I, 243.

⁴² *Bulletin du tribunal criminel révolutionnaire*, no. 37, 2^{ème}. supplément.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

The American poet and patriot, Joel Barlow, testified that he had visited London at the juncture when the accused left that city for Paris. "My friends in London were also Miranda's; they were the most pronounced friends of liberty, the most zealous defenders of the French Revolution. They always lauded this philosophic warrior, and they made known their deep satisfaction when they learned that he had entered the service of freedom in France." Barlow praised Miranda as a unique personage who did not resemble the lovers of liberty in either France or England:

"From the abyss of despotism where to read was prohibited, where to think was a crime, where the only literature which was allowed to circulate was steeped in ignorance, this South American, taking nature as his guide, discovered that he was a man, that all men were equal, that it was his duty to teach this lesson, to overthrow thrones, and to liberate his native land." ⁴⁴

The humanitarian philosopher, Thomas Paine, who was now a member of the National Convention and who in November, 1792, had written this old acquaintance to congratulate him on his military successes, testified in part as follows:

"It is impossible that a man can understand the heart of another as well as he understands his own; but from all that I know about General Miranda I cannot believe that he wished to betray the confidence which the French Republic had reposed in him, more especially as the destiny of the French Revolution was intimately related to the favorite object of his heart, namely, the deliverance of Spanish America,—a design for which he was hunted by the court of Spain during the greatest part of his life." ⁴⁵

Chauveau Lagarde pleaded eloquently for the accused general. In the opening of his argument he declared that it was by an extraordinary destiny that Miranda found himself accused of having betrayed liberty by the very man whose lib-

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* ⁴⁵ *Ibid.* See further, Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, II, 22-23.

erticide projects he had denounced. In his peroration the advocate reasoned that, if Miranda did not receive satisfaction, Dumouriez would be justified, that in the future no one would dare to report perfidious conspirators, and that national exigency demanded that "experienced and incorruptible generals" should be placed in charge of the armies of France.⁴⁶

According to a memorandum preserved by Miranda, in his charge to the jury the public prosecutor exonerated him from any blame for the disastrous defeat at Neerwinden. Fouquier-Tinville reminded the jurors that divers witnesses had testified to the accused's love for liberty. He said that there should not be any doubt in their minds about the verdict.⁴⁷ On May 16, 1793, the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal asked the jury to answer three questions: (1) Had General Miranda betrayed the interests of the French Republic during the bombardment of Maestricht? (2) Had he betrayed the interests of France during the evacuation of Liége? (3) Had he betrayed the interests of the Republic at the battle of Neerwinden? In successive declarations each member of the jury expressed the opinion that Miranda was not a traitor.⁴⁸ When Montané announced this decision, in a most dramatic manner the jubilant general declared that his case illustrated how easily calumnies might be credited. To quote the *Moniteur*: "The people applauded the judgment concerning Miranda and also his speech; they took him in their arms, carried him in triumph, and crowned him."⁴⁹

Montané indited a letter of congratulation to General Miranda to declare that he held him "in the highest esteem" and to invite him to attend "a republican dinner."⁵⁰ General Pille, who had been one of Dumouriez's commanders in Belgium, wrote to Miranda with no less enthusiasm to felicitate him, as well as the Republic, because of the splendid justice which the Revolutionary Tribunal had rendered to his civic and military

⁴⁶ Chauveau Lagarde, *Plaidoyer pour le général Miranda*, pp. 63-64.

⁴⁷ Undated jottings, Mir. MSS., vol. 40.

⁴⁸ Rojas, *Miranda dans la révolution française*, pp. 210-16.

⁴⁹ *Moniteur*, May 21, 1793. ⁵⁰ May 17, 1793, Mir. MSS., vol. 40.

virtues. "One can say to you with Seneca," continued Pille, "*Virtus cum violata est, refulsit*. Your enemies have not been able to ruin you by their persecutions; they have merely demonstrated to France your true worth."⁵¹ Miranda's advocate, who later won renown by his defense of Marie Antoinette, published a broadside in which he avowed that the finest day of his life was that on which he defended the accused general, and that he had never known a man who inspired him with more esteem and veneration. "One cannot imagine more grandeur in a character, more elevation in ideas, or more of true love for all the virtues. * * * I maintain that there is not a single man who followed the trial who has not become convinced that Miranda is not only guiltless but that he is a man who is most moral and virtuous; and I avow on my honor that several witnesses who accused him with great bitterness have since proclaimed his innocence and have deposited in my hands their most formal retractions."⁵²

The judgment of the Revolutionary Tribunal on Miranda's military conduct seems just and righteous altogether. Yet some attention should be given to the views of other persons than those who participated in the famous trial. In his justificatory memoirs Dumouriez wrote of his former associate in these words: "Miranda, * * * a man of spirit and intelligence, knew the theory of war better than any other general in the army but was a stranger to its practice. * * * This general had a strange, haughty, and severe character that made him universally detested; he knew not how to manage French soldiers who should always be led with gaiety and confidence."⁵³

The littérateur and publicist, Louvet de Couvrai, placed the responsibility for the defeat at Neerwinden upon the shoulders of General Dumouriez who ordered a precipitate attack without waiting for reënforcements. Louvet asserted that

⁵¹ May 20, 1793, *ibid.*, vol. 41.

⁵² Chauveau Lagarde, *Chauveau à ses concitoyens*.

⁵³ *La vie et les mémoires*, IV, 17, 18.

Dumouriez feared that he would be arrested and knew that Miranda did not agree with his principles: "He hastened to hazard a battle in the hope, if he were victorious, of making himself redoubtable to the Convention, and, if he were defeated, of allying himself with the enemy in order to march against the Mountain."⁵⁴ In his treatise on the military history of the French Revolution, Baron Jomini makes this judicious comment regarding Dumouriez's denunciation of Miranda's retreat: "The assertion of Dumouriez is unjust; he was doubtless ignorant that Miranda had been engaged with very superior forces which outflanked him and that as all of Miaczinsky's soldiers had not yet arrived upon the battle field Miranda's retreat was made even more inevitable. The commander in chief should not have engaged his weakened wing too far from the center of his army."⁵⁵

A favorable yet discriminatory judgment on Miranda's military activities is contained in Cochelet's report concerning French generals presented to the military committee of the National Convention:

"Miranda has a genius which is vast and profound. He loves liberty and equality as a young man loves his dear mistress; he is as faithful to them as a thinking man is to a woman who possesses goodness and beauty. He honors the soldier and ceaselessly watches his welfare. * * * Miranda highly appreciates the volunteers. He was ceaselessly occupied with these duties: I did not behold him distracted for a single instant; to me he seemed to possess all the moral qualities of a good general:—activity, intelligence, watchfulness, discernment, probity, patriotism, love for the soldiers, regard for discipline, and a comprehensive vision. One might only reproach him because of his vivacity, because of an air of hauteur in his bearing, and because he does not display enough sympathy for those men who are less discerning, less intelligent, and less active than himself."⁵⁶

⁵⁴ *Mémoires*, p. 248, note.

⁵⁵ *Histoire critique et militaire des guerres de la révolution*, III, 114.

⁵⁶ *Rapport fait au comité militaire de la convention nationale*, p. 4.

On the day after his justification by the Revolutionary Tribunal the acquitted general wrote to its President and asked that orders should be given that his manuscripts, his household goods, his horses, and his military equipage—all of which had been sequestered by the court—should be promptly returned to him. On the same day Montané issued orders that this property should be restored. Though Miranda evidently supposed that he was still in the military service of France, yet her government later took the view that, as he had not been included in the military report of May 15, 1793, his service automatically terminated on June 1. In that very month the Girondists irretrievably lost control of the Convention and the party of the Mountain came into power.

Chapter VII

EXPERIENCES IN FRANCE, 1793-1797

AFTER HIS triumphant acquittal Miranda entered upon another phase of his varied career. As England was at war with France, he was not drawn to London. An ex-general who was not ready absolutely to disavow the French Revolution and all its works could scarcely hope to enjoy a peaceful asylum across the channel. His quondam protector, the Czarina, had been grievously shocked at the excesses of the French; and it seems, too, that at this juncture Miranda had completely lost touch with her. Further, although he was inclined to doubt the wisdom of certain revolutionary policies, yet he had formed attachments in France. He loved the Parisian *milieu*. Lastly, there is reason to believe that he had not utterly relinquished the dream of emancipating his native land by the aid of French soldiers. Hence he lived in or near Paris for four years longer. Yet he ran a risk by sojourning in the French capital; for the philosophical enthusiast, as Miss Williams characterized him, did not enjoy the favor of radical leaders. The sequel will amply show that this poetess was right when she said that General Miranda was one of "the particular objects of Robespierre's rage."¹

Miranda soon rented apartments from Tissot at Belleville, a suburb of Paris. To these quarters he transported his books, engravings, manuscripts, pictures, and sculptures. It was undoubtedly his intention to arrange the voluminous papers concerning his travels and military service. About this time he resumed his acquaintance with Thomas Paine, to whom he evidently made known his relations with Hamilton, Knox, and Pitt. Miranda was soon forced to realize that he was under surveillance. Though officials of Belleville later declared that his conduct was irreproachable,² yet one of his servants was

¹ Williams, *Letters containing a Sketch of the Politics of France*, I, 239.

² "Seize Vendémiaire, l'an 3^e," A. N., F⁷, 4774⁴⁷.



*Maximilien Robespierre. Painting by Pierre Danloux in
the Musée de Versailles.*

arrested, and his house was searched by the police.³

Meantime he had composed an account of his trial in two volumes which was to be illustrated by his picture drawn by the painter Jean Lebarbier. Subsequently, however, the proof sheets of this work were destroyed by Stone, who had advanced the money for its publication, because of a fear that otherwise he would himself be dragged to the guillotine.⁴ Still there were preserved two portraits of the general that differed slightly in style. After being engraved by Gaucher, one of them was later used by Miranda to adorn treatises dealing with certain phases of his career.

Early in July, 1793, the Committee of Public Safety directed that Miranda should be arrested and that his papers should be placed under a seal. By order of the Parisian police on July 9 he was thrust into the prison of La Force; an entry in its register stated that the cause of his incarceration was "not explained."⁵ A police report complained, however, that among Miranda's friends were some disaffected Frenchmen, as well as Stone, who was suspected of being Pitt's agent.⁶ The prisoner's valet alleged that his master had tried to prevent him from registering in the National Guard.⁷ Cambon informed the National Convention that Miranda was implicated in a royalist conspiracy. In a harangue which he was allowed to make before the Convention the suspect rightly declared that the magistrates of Belleville had exonerated him. Against his imprisonment he protested in vigorous words. He demanded revenge for "this infringement on liberty. I read the justice of my cause in the Constitution: 'There is oppression against society when one citizen is oppressed.' * * * Yes, citizen-legislators, I am oppressed,—I, who have always been the strongest supporter of liberty!"

³ "Procès-Verbal de visite du 1^{er} Juin, 1793," Mir. MSS., vol. 41.

⁴ Stone to Miranda, 29 Fructidor, an 4, and 26 Vendémiaire, an 5, *ibid.*, vol. 43. ⁵ Alboise and Maquet, *Les prisons de l'Europe*, p. 199.

⁶ "Le 16 Ventôse," A. N., + + F⁷, 4774⁴⁷, f. 316.

⁷ "Extrait du procès verbal du Comité de Salut Public de la Commune de Belleville," Sept. 13, 1793, Mir. MSS., vol. 41.

As reflections were cast upon the actions of the committee that had been sent by the Convention to Belgium, Delacroix arose to defend it and to denounce Miranda's conduct. "He claims that we sent him to Paris without hearing him, but how could we speak to him when his soldiers had been vainly searching for him for three days?"⁸ Without being given an opportunity to repel that imputation, Miranda was remanded to prison. On August 12, 1793, he denied Cambon's allegation and again protested against his arbitrary imprisonment.

In vain did Montané express a noble opinion of the incarcerated general: "I found in Miranda a man with a well-disciplined mentality, a man who was constantly studying literature, science, and art. * * * He is a man of the highest morality, not only incapable of conspiracy and intrigue but a true republican by virtue and principle, a man who constantly admires nature,—in fine a man of the rarest merit."⁹ During the early days of his imprisonment Miranda committed to paper these justificatory reflections concerning his conduct: "I am a free man in chains. I am an innocent man imprisoned as a measure of general security." He added that he had had liaisons "with the warmest friends of liberty and equality in England, France, and the United States," and that he had "exposed his life to promote the triumph of the French Republic against her external enemies."¹⁰

Though he may not at first have suspected it, Miranda had incurred the dislike of Maximilien Robespierre, the cold, proud character who had acquired a dominant influence on the Committee of Public Safety. That enigmatical leader of the Mountain dreamed of establishing the reign of virtue in a purified France. Fanatically intolerant of those who did not accept his dogmas, he became the chief director of the Reign of Terror.

With regard to Miranda, as with respect to less fortunate victims of the tyrant's enmity, it is difficult to say whether the

⁸ *Moniteur*, July 15, 1793.

⁹ To "Citoyens Representans," July 22, 1793, A. N., + + F⁷, 4474⁴⁷, ff. 328-29.

¹⁰ Undated memorandum, Mir. MSS., vol. 41.

persecution was inspired by personal hatred or by a desire to make Virtue triumph. While Miranda was languishing in a dungeon, the implacable tyrant delivered a harangue in which he denounced him as a member of the Girondists.¹¹ Miss Williams took the view that "the real cause of Robespierre's animosity towards him is not well known, but may be resolved into that general hatred which he bore towards all men of talents. * * * Twice, in the zenith of his tyranny, he accused Miranda to his subjects, the Jacobins." The only obstacle which shielded Miranda, added the poetess, was a feeling of shame in Fouquier-Tinville who put off the "second trial required by Robespierre, till the tyrant would hear of delay and excuses no more; and himself inscribed Miranda's name on the fatal list for the twelfth of Thermidor."¹² She thus described the philosophic manner in which the general disciplined himself for any contingency:

"Miranda submitted to an imprisonment of eighteen months, under the continual expectation of death, with that philosophical strength of mind which he possesses in a most eminent degree. He had indeed determined not to be dragged to the guillotine, and had therefore provided himself with poison. Thus armed, he sent for a considerable number of books from his library, and placed them in his little chamber, of which he found means to keep the sole possession. Here he told me, that he endeavored to forget his present situation in the study of history and science. He tried to consider himself as a passenger on a long voyage, who had to fill up the vacuity of time with the researches of knowledge, and was alike prepared to perish or to reach the shore."¹³

Even in La Force the life of Miranda was thronged with interesting incidents. He soon became acquainted with distinguished Frenchmen who were incarcerated there. Among them were two Girondists, Valazé and Vergniaud, and Adam Lux, the deputy who was an admirer of Charlotte Corday. L. A. Champagneux, who was sent to prison from a post in the min-

¹¹ *Moniteur*, Feb. 12, 1794.

¹² *Letters*, I, 244-45.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 245-46.

istry of the interior, became one of the South American's intimate friends.

According to Champagneux's reminiscences, he and Miranda frequently conversed about politics and war. The Frenchman declared that the ex-general was an ardent champion of the rules by which the audacious Marshal Turenne had won victories for Louis XIV. From these conversations Champagneux gained the impression that Miranda would not consent to win a battle except by following the principles of warfare which had been employed by Alexander and Cæsar. Achille du Châtelet, a scholar and a lover of liberty, tried to act as judge of the debates in which Champagneux praised the strategy of French commanders. In the discussions of Champagneux and Miranda about leading political systems of the world, the latter displayed much fondness for the government of England. He declared that her Constitution was the best which the world had ever known; for only under it, said he, did men enjoy complete civil liberty. The Venezuelan praised Pitt. Robespierre he denounced in phrases that glowed with indignation! ¹⁴

One after another Miranda's companions passed out of the prison. In October, 1793, Adam Lux was summoned before the Revolutionary Tribunal whence he was speedily sent to the guillotine. The debates between Valazé and Vergniaud were sternly interrupted by a summons to the former to appear before the dread tribunal. During a despondent mood, in March, 1794, Achille du Châtelet committed suicide. In an annotation to Du Châtelet's memorandum affirming that he had sold to Miranda his property in La Force, the ostensible buyer wrote the following commentary: "This is the manner in which this virtuous and unfortunate friend, who had determined to swallow poison, undertook to devise to me his books and other valuable property as a token of remembrance."¹⁵ Among the books that Du Châtelet thus bequeathed

¹⁴ Champagneux, *Oeuvres de J. M. Ph. Roland*, II, 409-16.

¹⁵ Du Châtelet's memorandum, "12 Nivos l'an deux," Mir. MSS., vol. 42. See further, Champagneux, II, 413-14.

to his fellow prisoner were the works of Franklin, Bossuet, and Hobbes, Cook's *Voyages*, Young's *Travels*, and the *Voyages* of La Hontan. It was about this time that on being led to her execution, Madame Roland raised her eyes to the statue of liberty placed near the guillotine, and exclaimed: *Oh! liberté comme on t' a jouée!*

Soon afterwards Champagneux, Miranda, and other prisoners were transferred from La Force to the Madelonnettes, an asylum for repentant prostitutes which was being utilized as a prison. Here they were confined in very uncomfortable quarters. Miranda now prepared a fresh protest against his detention. One of his companions in the Madelonnettes, an architect and sculptor named Antonine Chrisostome Quatremère de Quincy, was much attracted by Miranda's dynamic personality. In a sketch of the Venezuelan that this artist published at Paris after being released, he thus apostrophized his fellow countrymen:

"Frenchmen! if one could doubt that Miranda is at the same time a most enlightened friend as well as a passionate lover of liberty and equality, it would be necessary to deny the existence of a love of liberty! * * * If liberty were banished from the rest of the globe, the heart of Miranda would serve as its last asylum. * * * Do not consider the cause of Miranda simply as that of an individual. A single man may decide the destiny of an entire nation. Behold the people still oppressed by the yoke of Spanish despotism who will some day reproach you for having deprived them of a liberator!"¹⁶

From a refuge beyond prison walls Quatremère de Quincy wrote to Miranda to assure him that he had taken measures to promote his release. The artist asked him to have a little more patience and to confide in the zeal of his friends.¹⁷ After a conference with Lebarbier and a bookseller named Barrois l'ainé, Quatremère de Quincy indited this message to the prisoner: "As for myself, I shall enjoy neither happiness, nor

¹⁶ *Précis pour Miranda*, pp. 9, 10.

¹⁷ Undated, Mir. MSS., vol. 41.

pleasure, nor liberty until I can share them with our dear general whom I cordially embrace.”¹⁸ At the prisoner’s request, Barrois *l’ainé* sent him one hundred and fifty books, and expressed the opinion that he would eventually be set free.¹⁹ In a bitter spirit Robespierre’s victim responded: “One would certainly have to be a tree or a stone to remain quietly incarcerated without knowing anything about the steps taken for his liberation. * * * The slowness with which they act in respect to me is really tyrannical and insupportable.”²⁰ However Miranda was not destined to be dragged in a cart to the guillotine in the days of the *Grande Terreur*.

News of the tragic downfall and death of Robespierre in the midsummer of 1794, had renewed the hopes of the Moderates who were confined in Parisian dungeons. In August, 1794, Champagneux bade farewell to his fellow prisoners in the Madelonnettes. A strange delay in his release galled Miranda; hence on October 7 he addressed a protest to the Committee of Public Safety. In it he asserted that he had been kept in prison because of Robespierre’s enmity. In addition, he intimated that Spain’s minions had intrigued against him in order to thwart his schemes for the emancipation of the Spanish Indies.²¹ Champagneux soon wrote to his companion in misfortune to ask that he should give friendly advice to his son who was about to pursue military studies in Paris. “If he has the opportunity of seeing you,” said Champagneux, “I beg that you will inspire him with a love for labor and for the cause which he has embraced; this advice from your lips will be the most powerful encouragement for him in his career. If you will be so good as to permit him to see you occasionally, I shall entertain no doubt of his good conduct and success.”²²

From La Force whither he had been transferred, early in 1795 Miranda sent another protest to the National Conven-

¹⁸ Undated, Mir. MSS., vol. 41.

¹⁹ “5 Floreal, an 2,” *ibid.*

²⁰ “22 Vendémiaire,” *ibid.*

²¹ “16 Vendémiaire l’an 3^e,” A. N., + + F⁷, 4474⁴⁷, f. 319.

²² “12 Brumaire, an 3^e,” Mir. MSS., vol. 43.

tion against his treatment. He alleged that he was the only person imprisoned by the Tyrant who had not been released.²³ At last, on the motion of Pelet, who praised him as an enemy of slavery and a friend of liberty, in the middle of January, the Convention decreed that Miranda should be set free.²⁴ Though the Terror had ceased, yet gruesome scenes met the eyes of the Venezuelan as he passed through the streets of the city which had not inaptly been likened to a human abattoir.

Soon after his release the general sent a letter to his old friend Knox that described his mood in this sentence: "I take up the pen only to tell you that I live, and that my sentiments for our dear Colombia as well as for all my friends in that part of the world have not changed in the least in spite of the events which are bound to ruin France."²⁵ On March 17, 1795, Miranda leased lodgings in a house in Rue St. Florentin at an annual rent of two thousand four hundred livres.²⁶ As he secured the option of renting his apartments for three, six, or nine years, the general, as he still styled himself, evidently contemplated residing in the Tuileries section of Paris for an indefinite period. As after his arrival in Paris funds had been advanced to Miranda by Stone, upon taking up his residence near the Tuileries the ex-general must have been in dire financial straits.

On April 20, 1795, he addressed to the Committee of Public Safety a claim for money that was owing him. He stated that he had not been fully paid for his military service to the Republic. He wished to be compensated for his horses, carriages, and clothing which had been sequestered in 1793, and which he alleged had never been returned. Further, he asked to be reimbursed for the rental of the apartments where his property had been kept under seal during his incarceration.

²³ *Le général Miranda à la représentation nationale*, pp. 15, 16.

²⁴ *Moniteur*, Jan. 17, 1795.

²⁵ "22 Ventôse, 3^{me} année," Knox MSS., vol. 37, f. 52.

²⁶ Extract of contract signed by Miranda with J. Molinos and J. G. Le-grande, 27 Ventôse, an 3^{ème}, A. N., F⁷, 7112, dossier B, 7190.

Lastly, he demanded to be indemnified for his recent imprisonment by the payment of a salary as French general from August, 1793, to January, 1795.²⁷ On July 29, at a joint meeting of the Committee of Public Safety and the Committee of Finance of the National Convention, the decision was reached that in addition to 11,932 livres in assignats and 4,350 livres in specie which France had already paid Miranda for his services, to satisfy his claim he should be given 35,002 livres in specie and 21,104 livres in assignats.²⁸

There is no available proof, however, that this compensation was paid by the French Government. On the other side, allegations later made by Miranda indicate that his claim was never completely liquidated.²⁹ In a will drawn up in 1805 he made the statement that France still owed him for military service, which he arrogantly claimed lasted until March, 1801, some 10,000 louis d'or.³⁰

Yet neglect on the part of France to keep the flattering pledge given by Servan did not curb the ex-general's extravagance. A visit, on May 12, 1795, of the Danish poet, Jean Immanuel Baggsen, to Rue St. Florentin helps us momentarily to pierce the glamor that envelops this epoch of Miranda's career and to catch a fleeting glimpse of his private life. Baggsen declared that Miranda was now devoting himself to "the Muses and the Graces in truly enchanting lodgings near the Tuileries." The poet affirmed that, much dissatisfied with the course of events in France, this "veritable Don Quixote of Republicanism" was consoling himself by 'the study of science and art.' He has the most select little library and the most tasteful rooms that I have ever beheld. A visitor might indeed believe himself at Athens in the house of Pericles."³¹

A fascinating story about a dinner party that Miranda held about this time was told by the lady who became the Duchesse d'Abrantès:

²⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 43. ²⁸ A. N., F⁷, 7112, B, 7190.

²⁹ See his letter dated 28 Nivôse, an 4, in the *Journal de Paris*, Jan. 28, 1796.

³⁰ Robertson, "Miranda's Testamentary Dispositions," in *His. Am. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 285-86. ³¹ *Timoleon und Immanuel*, pp. 261-62.



NAPOLEON

*Napoleon Bonaparte as a General of the French Revolution.
Drawing by Jean Guérin. Engraving by Tapinois.
In the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.*

"One day Napoleon said to us: 'I dined today at the home of a remarkable man. I believe him to be a spy of both England and Spain. He lodges on the third floor and is furnished like a satrap. In the midst of this luxury he complains of poverty and then gives us dinners prepared by Méo and served on dishes of silver. This is a bizarre circumstance which I should like to have explained. I dined there with men of the greatest importance. There is one whom I should like to meet again: he is a Don Quixote,—with this difference, that he is not mad.' When my mother asked his name, he responded, 'It is General Miranda; that man has a sacred fire in his soul.' * * * Miranda had a face and figure that were uncommon rather because of their originality than because of their beauty: he had the Spanish eye of fire, a tawny skin, and lips that were thin and spiritual even in their silence; his countenance brightened as soon as he began to speak,—which he did with inconceivable rapidity. In the depths of his soul there must be the flame of a sacred fire."³²

In the autumn of 1796 a dispute broke out between Stone and Miranda which incidentally affords further information about the latter's mode of life. From a statement drawn up by Miranda it appears that beginning in June, 1793, the Englishman had generously loaned sums of money to him, that Stone had not been fully reimbursed, and that a difference of opinion had developed as to the exact amount which was still owing. A question also arose as to who was to be held accountable for printing the volumes on Miranda's trial that the Englishman had destroyed. The decline in the value of assignats complicated these transactions, as well as the fact that certain monies sent to Stone by Miranda had been stolen from his creditor's house. It is difficult to determine the exact truth in this matter; hence we shall content ourselves with a quotation from one of Stone's letters that casts a ray of light on the manner in which Miranda supported an expensive establishment:

³² *Mémoires*, I, 329-31. Cf. Viarz, *L'aide de camp ou l'auteur inconnu*, pp. 129-30.

"As to myself, General, I am more disappointed than dissatisfied. My attachment to you was founded on the purest feelings of public and private virtue. I shall only repeat that I early saw in your proceedings sometimes imprudence, and sometimes indecorum—imprudence in displaying a pomp, unsuited to your circumstances, and indecorum in putting your friends to the expense of providing the means; to myself, who was intimately acquainted with all your circumstances, it went sometimes so far, as to have the air of extreme culpability, bordering on moral deficiency, but I have never whispered this sentiment to anyone." ⁸³

Stone's intimate friend, Miss Williams, alleged that the impecunious South American was not without political aspirations. "Miranda was ambitious," she said, "but he was so little of a royalist that he was fully convinced that the French would designate him as one of the two consuls who, in the opinion of many people, would be put at the head of the new government. He had indeed promised me very seriously that in the case of his elevation, 'he would consecrate his days to the cause of empire; and that in the evenings he would rejoin our little literary circle.' " ⁸⁴ Whether or not Miranda beheld such visions, it is clear that he was dissatisfied with the existing Constitution of France.

In July, 1795, he published a pamphlet maintaining that France was on the verge of a precipice from which only the combined action of virtuous men could rescue her. He argued against the concentration of power in one body and urged that the three departments of government should be separated. In the framing and sanctioning of laws he held that both houses of the legislature should have the same authority. With respect to foreign policy he declared himself against territorial expansion; he maintained that France should retire within her former boundary which should be protected by a line of fortresses. The people who lived between this boundary

⁸³ 29 Fructidor, an 4, Mir. MSS., vol. 43. Three items from an account entitled "Balance entre Mr. Stone et Miranda" (*ibid.*) indicate that Stone had made to the painter Lebarbier three payments aggregating 40,000 francs on Miranda's behalf. ⁸⁴ *Souvenirs de la révolution française*, p. 97.

and the Rhine should be declared free; and the evacuated territories should then serve as buffer states. Adjoining nations should be assured of the free navigation of French rivers that flowed through their territories.

With respect to colonial policy, he advocated that France should exchange some of her less important islands for the Spanish portion of Santo Domingo, while she should secure Puerto Rico in exchange for territory that French soldiers occupied in Spain as the result of the campaigns of 1793, 1794, and 1795.³⁵ Miranda evidently did not favor a plan of campaign broached to him by Servan that involved the conquest of northern Spain and perhaps also the acquisition by France of portions of Spanish America.³⁶ However the Treaty of Basel, which marked the end of the First Coalition, provided for the cession of the Spanish part of Santo Domingo to France. Soon afterwards the Venezuelan was again considered for a post in the French West Indies. On September 7, 1795, Vergniaud wrote to Miranda and declared that only he was capable of governing Santo Domingo not only because he was "as good a general as a republican" but also because he knew "the manners and character of the people better than anyone else" and could inspire them with confidence.³⁷ Yet this design, which Vergniaud had recommended to certain deputies, was also blighted; for soon afterwards Miranda was denounced to the National Convention as a member of the faction that opposed the expansion of France.

The government established in accordance with the Constitution of 1795 was thus compelled to pass upon Miranda's fate. This Constitution placed executive power in a board of five men designated the Directory, while legislative authority was vested in two chambers, the Council of Five Hundred, and the Council of Ancients. In the end of October, upon the advice of Merlin de Douai, minister of police, the Council of Five

³⁵ *Opinion du général Miranda sur la situation actuelle de la France.*

³⁶ Servan to Miranda, 17 Thermidor, an 3^{me}, Mir. MSS., vol. 43.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 42.

Hundred promulgated a decree providing for the provisional arrest of Miranda in company with other persons who were supposed to be conspirators.³⁸ Before being seized by the police, Miranda again busied himself framing protests in which he defended his conduct and demanded justification. The result was that on November 27, 1795, he was again arrested; his papers and correspondence were again examined in search of incriminatory documents. Clapped into the prison of Plessis, on December 11 he addressed a protest to the Council of Five Hundred.³⁹ This body decided that, according to a practice which had been adopted in other cases, Miranda should be allowed, under police surveillance, to visit his friends. Miss Williams thus narrates what ensued:

“The first use that Miranda made of this permission was to visit us with his guardian. Our friendship for him indeed was so strong that to make his position more endurable, we consented to have him as a guest, on condition of entertaining also the police officer. It would have been difficult to make a greater sacrifice to friendship. The time arrived, however, when Miranda became tired of the surveillance to which he had been subjected; he also forgot the voluntary restraint under which we had been placed in order to receive him. Hence one evening after dinner, ignoring our attachment, scorning the danger of compromising us, and disdaining the great principles about which he descanted, he walked around while drinking his coffee, opened the door, and vanished.”⁴⁰

While he was passing his life in and out of prison, Miranda was carrying on an interesting correspondence with various friends. With Madame Delphine de Custine, whom he had first met in La Force where her husband was for a time confined, Miranda had an *affaire de coeur*. In the summer of 1795, when she went on a trip to Switzerland, the philandering refugee intrusted her with a letter to Johann Lavater. When Madame Custine left Zurich a few months later, Lavater

³⁸ *Moniteur*, Nov. 22, 1795.

³⁹ Rojas, *Miranda dans la révolution française*, pp. 324-28.

⁴⁰ *Souvenirs de la révolution française*, 98-99.

wrote her an epistle inclosing a message for Miranda. "He is a man," said the Swiss, "who is actually composed of a world of men." To the revolutionary he said, "You are always first in my thoughts,—a man whom I can never forget, * * * an energetic man, who maintains himself in whirlpools of revolutions, of intrigues, and of cabals."⁴¹ On the fly-leaf of a little tract that he sent to Miranda the physiognomist inscribed this unique greeting: "You have a thousand friends who are stronger, but not any who are any more sincere admirers of you than am I."⁴² Lavater had already filed with his collection of portraits the following appreciation of Miranda the American:

"Almighty man! You thrive on the feeling of power! Not deceived by the spoken word, you search out secrets within the heart! Who divines like you? Whom does so little escape? Who surmises so well every weakness of the weak? Who surmises so well the mighty power of each? With what strength, what power, what versatility, what haughtiness, and what courage has Nature endowed you!"

In the end of 1795 Miranda dined at the Danish Legation, and had an exchange of letters with the famous Madame de Staël. She sent him a brief note as a testimonial of her lasting esteem and expressed a desire to see him again before her impending departure for Switzerland.⁴³ In December from a retreat in the country General Duhamel sent Miranda this tribute: "I have learned through journals about the slight success of your efforts to defend against arbitrary authority not only your own cause but also that of all citizens. This made me indignant; for I conceive that during a régime of crime and anarchy you have been for three years the victim of factions and of party spirit."⁴⁴

Meantime the Parisian police and their quarry were having

⁴¹ Maugras, *Delphine de Sabran*, p. 271, and note.

⁴² *À mes amis*, Mir. MSS., vol. 42.

⁴³ Custine, *Delphine de Custine*, 66, note 1.

⁴⁴ 22 Frimaire, an 4^e, Mir. MSS., vol. 43.

a game of hide and seek. Early in December, 1795, Miranda had solicited them for a respite from their persecutions so that he might be able to visit his lodgings without being accompanied by a gendarme.⁴⁵ On December 15 he sent a protest to the Executive Power from Mesnil, one of the communes bearing that name in the department of Seine-et-Oise, to ask that he be granted a passport for Copenhagen, that he be paid certain sums still owing him by the French Government, and that he be afforded an opportunity to arrange his affairs.⁴⁶ Through a new-found acquaintance named Dupéron, an employee in the French Department of Foreign Affairs, on January 13, 1796, the fugitive published a letter in the *Journal de Paris* denouncing his persecution. Fifteen days later, in response to a request for a contribution to a forced loan, Miranda sent from Mesnil a letter which was soon published in that journal. In this communication he satirically pointed out that the Executive Power had recently designated him as an alien who should be expelled from France, but that it now classed him as a French citizen who should be taxed. However, he avowed his desire to show his sincere devotion to the Republic even in the ruined state of his fortunes. In a humorous vein he directed the French treasury to transfer to the tax collector the sum of eleven thousand livres which was to be deducted from the amount still owing him by the government.

As a result of these letters and of the representations of his friends there developed in Paris a sentiment against Miranda's threatened arrest. The courageous deputy, Jean Denis Lanjuinais, who had conferred with the police regarding his suspected friend, sent Miranda an assurance that he could remain in France in "the most perfect security; that, if the government should decide to execute its decree of arrest, its orders would still have to be transmitted to the police; that the silence of the government constitutes a tacit revocation

⁴⁵ 17 Frimaire, an 4, A. N., police générale, F7, 3688⁵, 3249.

⁴⁶ *Moniteur*, Jan. 4, 1796.

of this decree, and that besides, if it should happen that new orders should arrive, I shall be advised in time, so that you can be warned." ⁴⁷ Hence, although the Directory had on December 6, 1795, ordered that Miranda should be arrested and in company with Marchena escorted by gendarmes to Switzerland, yet he still continued to reside in or near Paris.

In his secret asylum a letter from Champagneux reached Miranda conveying the news that fresh calumniators had accused him of abetting Pitt and other enemies of France who were fomenting a conspiracy. Champagneux deemed this an opportune occasion to express an opinion of his "dear companion in misfortune." He avowed that during an ordeal lasting a year, "he had always found his friend the same, that is to say, a lover of liberty but of a liberty which admits as companions only truth and justice." ⁴⁸ Upon becoming aware that his lodgings in Rue St. Florentin had again been visited by the police, in April, 1796, Miranda addressed an indignant protest to the judge of his district maintaining that the law concerning aliens should not be directed against himself and boldly demanding that "this strange persecution should cease." ⁴⁹ In the summer of that year the police of Paris, who kept a watchful eye upon him, intimated that he was sojourning with his "mistress."

Meantime Miranda had not relinquished his interest in learning. A certificate signed by Barrois *l'ainé*, Lebarbier, and an architect named Le Grand, attested their belief in his "keen and enlightened taste for art and letters." ⁵⁰ With Quatremère de Quincy, who had been proscribed because of complicity in a conspiracy, Miranda engaged in an interesting exchange of opinions about history and art. The persecuted South American visited this friend in a secret refuge and proposed that they should correspond about the dangers which menaced the art treasures of Rome because of the spoliation

⁴⁷ "9 Pluaise," Mir. MSS., vol. 42.

⁴⁸ "17 Nivôse, an 4," *ibid.*, vol. 43.

⁴⁹ "20 Germinal, an 4," *ibid.*

⁵⁰ 19 Germinal, an 4 (copy), A. N., F⁷, 7112, dossier B, 7190.

of Napoleon who had subjugated northern Italy. In response to a letter from Miranda the artist wrote: "I am not surprised at the profundity with which you treat this subject, because it is true that what you furnish me in the form of letters is nothing else than the sketch of a tract which you intend to publish on this topic. You will not doubt that under a foreign sky the ancient statues will lose the instructive virtue which artists went to seek in Rome."⁵¹

Even while he was incarcerated in the Madelonettes Miranda was in touch with Americans. A message reached him from Thomas Paine, who had recently been released from prison in the Luxembourg, to the effect that James Monroe, "the present Minister from the United States of America, will do everything in his power to serve you."⁵² In reply, writing in the third person, Miranda thanked Monroe for "his humanity and attention" and expressed the wish that "Mr. Paine would be so kind, as to call upon him and have a few minutes conversation—the interest of America and those of Liberty are concerned."⁵³ Whether or not the author of *Common Sense* talked about human liberty with her imprisoned devotee, it is clear that he mentioned to Minister Monroe certain manuscripts in Miranda's possession relating to "a negotiation with Mr. Pitt, confided to M. Miranda some time since by Messrs. Hamilton and Knox, the object of which was to adopt some effectual measure to liberate South America." When, on the eve of his return to the United States, Monroe asked Miranda to intrust him with these documents, however, the dissembling advocate of Spanish-American independence responded that Paine was mistaken.⁵⁴ Yet on April 1, 1797, Miranda transmitted copies of the correspondence to Alexander Hamilton with a suggestive letter from which we extract the following:

⁵¹ Quatremère de Quincy, *Lettres sur l'enlèvement des ouvrages de l'art antique à Athènes et à Rome*, p. 217.

⁵² Undated letter, Mir. MSS., vol. 41. ⁵³ Undated, *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 305. See further, Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine*, II, 24.

"It is after the lapse of four years that I take up the pen to tell you that I am still in the number of the living who remain in France after the Tyranny. * * * Adieu, my dear friend, continue to support with courage the cause of liberty that so many brigands and dunces have dishonored during the past five years while pretending to defend it. I am associated here,—and because of that am still persecuted,—with a small number of those persons who know liberty and who defend her sincerely; may Providence grant us success, at least for the welfare of this country and for the tranquillity of other countries! I have just received a letter from Mr. Monroe through his secretary, Mr. Prevost. The content of this letter makes me suspect a cabal or intrigue of Paine and Monroe. With them I have never had any liaison."⁵⁵

Miranda did not altogether forget to look after his financial affairs; for he addressed to Barthélemy, who had become Director under the Constitution of 1795, a request that he should be paid the money due him for his military service.⁵⁶ Evidently the ex-general did not contemplate remaining indefinitely in Paris under a cloud. On August 21, 1797, he made a new disposition of his property. In an odd testament he asked Barrois *l'ainé* to take charge of his "books, engravings, pictures, and other objects of art. * * * He is to conserve all these articles carefully until I make some other disposition of them. In case it should be necessary to send them outside of France, he will arrange this with Citizen Le Grand who is also charged with the care of the pictures, busts and replicas of sculptures." Miranda promised that as soon as possible he would transmit funds in order "to satisfy some small debts" which he had incurred. Whatever might happen to him, his executors were to make certain that his maid, Française Pelicier, should not come to want. In case of the testator's demise, Barrois, Clérisseau, and Le Grand, his executors, were to sell his property, and, after paying his debts, were to give the residue to his maid as "a recompense for the service and fidel-

⁵⁵ Ham. MSS., vol. 15, f. 204.

⁵⁶ 22 Prairial, an 5, and 22 Messidor, an 5, Mir. MSS., vol. 43.

ity" that she had given him during his persecution.⁵⁷

Even though the Venezuelan continued to reside in or near Paris after the coup d'état of September 4, 1797, when his name was included in the list of persons who were to be deported to Guiana, yet that proscription marks a turning point in his life. It doubtless provoked him to leave France. Still, because of the responsible position which he had held in the French army, he had gained a valuable training in the art of war. It is not an exaggeration to say that, with the possible exception of José de San Martín, no other Spanish American of this epoch received a better military training than Francisco de Miranda.

As a result of his long residence in France he had been profoundly influenced by the philosophy of her Revolution. There was no Spanish American who was better lessoned than Miranda in the doctrines, the method, and the spirit of the French Jacobins. Though at times he expressed much disgust at revolutionary excesses which he had witnessed in Paris, yet it seems probable that in 1797 he was more determined than ever to strive for the emancipation of his native land. Miranda's lodgings had doubtless served as a rendezvous for adventurous plotters who were interested in the destiny of the Spanish Indies, whether those persons were Frenchmen, United States citizens, or emissaries from the Spanish colonies. We shall see that while residing in Paris he had formed an elaborate plan for the realization of his absorbing passion.

⁵⁷ Robertson, "Miranda's Testamentary Dispositions," in *His. Am. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 282-83.

Chapter VIII

RELATIONS WITH ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES, 1797-1799

DURING MIRANDA'S sojourn in France the design of separating the Indies from Spain had not been completely forgotten in England. Among those Britons who cherished this idea was Nicholas Vansittart, a rising young barrister and politician. Influenced largely by mercantile motives, in August, 1796, the very month when France and Spain entered into an offensive and defensive alliance, Vansittart sketched an ambitious project for an expedition to be launched from England for the conquest of South America and Mexico. An able Scotch politician and intimate friend of William Pitt named Henry Dundas, who was secretary of state for war, became deeply interested in commercial relations between Spanish America and the English West Indies.

In April, 1797, Secretary Dundas instructed Thomas Picton, who had just been appointed governor of the newly acquired island of Trinidad, to pay special attention to measures which might promote commerce between that island and South America. He even informed Governor Picton that, in case the Spanish colonists were inclined to resist the oppressive policy of the Motherland, they would receive aid from England in a struggle for independence. A proclamation in Spanish embodying the views of his government was distributed by Picton on the coast of the adjacent Continent. This propaganda encouraged discontented Spanish colonists. In July, 1797, a revolutionary conspiracy was discovered at La Guaira; some of its ringleaders were imprisoned, while others escaped to Trinidad.

Agents of discontented Spanish Americans were prompt to take advantage of hostilities between England and Spain. Among those emissaries were Caro and Nariño. A native of New Granada, because of seditious actions Antonio Nariño had been sentenced to imprisonment in an African dungeon.

However he escaped from his guard, and proceeded to London where he apparently presented a plea to the English Government for arms, munitions, and frigates to liberate his native land.¹ Pedro José Caro represented himself to be a native of Cuba who owned extensive estates on that island. Caro arrived in London in February, 1797, and attempted to interest English ministers in the emancipation of the Spanish Indies. Disappointed in his first attempt, he withdrew to Paris where he secured letters of introduction from Miranda to Joseph Smith and John Turnbull. In his letter to Turnbull, Miranda said that this agent was intrusted with important papers. When he forwarded these documents to Downing Street from Dover, Caro accompanied them by a brief epistle in which he requested permission to visit England. After reaching London the Cuban broached his scheme to Turnbull, who, on October 18, 1797, informed William Pitt of the arrival of the emissary.

Caro's proposals were based on the hypothesis that many people in the Spanish Indies were intensely dissatisfied with the existing régime. In New Granada, said he, there were thirty thousand revolutionaries with plenty of money and gunpowder. From that base the rebellion might easily be extended not only to Peru and Chile but also to Central America and Mexico. Although the object of the insurrection was the establishment of an independent nation, yet Caro solicited the assistance of England. He asked that government to furnish cannon, muskets, and ammunition, to dispatch a fleet to invest Carthagena, and to send five thousand soldiers to seize the Isthmus of Panama. The conspirator promised that England would be amply remunerated for this succor when an independent government was set up in Spanish America.²

In a letter dated October 19, 1797, Caro informed the English Government that General Miranda had also labored on the project. "The merits and talents of this American," said Caro, "are well known; his reputation is worth an army. At present he is disposed to come to London for the purpose

¹ *El precursor*, pp. 224-27.

² Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 316-17.

of correcting the design, of concerting means for its execution, and of proceeding to America where he can promote the enterprise better than anyone else.”³ On December 23 Caro evidently renewed his plea to the ministers; he argued that Miranda would be hailed with enthusiasm by his Venezuelan compatriots.⁴ Miranda’s explanation of the motives that impelled him to make another visit to the English metropolis is furnished by an autobiographical fragment:

“In the month of January, 1797, in view of the ratification in Paris of the offensive and defensive treaty of Spain with the French Republic, I wrote to Mr. Turnbull in London by means of a trusty person whom I charged with the commission of presenting himself to Mr. Pitt. This agent was to make known the circumstances and conditions under which I had entered the French service and participated in a Revolution that, however, had entirely altered its character. My original object was nothing less than the liberty and independence of my native land. I considered it to be my duty to forsake a system so abominable as that which France was pursuing,—a system antagonistic to the régime that had induced me to enter her service in 1792. Accordingly I besought Pitt to turn his eyes to my previous propositions in favor of Spanish America; for the condition mentioned to me as that which was suitable for the beginning of the enterprise, namely, a war between Spain and England, had actually come to pass. Besides, there was a probability that hostilities would break out not only between France and the United States but also between the United States and Spain, thus assuring a useful coöperation in the execution of the plan. In addition, at the present juncture all the Spanish-American colonies are more mature and better prepared for the event. Mr. Turnbull punctually executed the commission; he was very well received by Mr. Pitt who gave him a favorable but tentative response. * * * At last, after waiting more than three months for a reply from Don Pedro Caro and Mr. Turnbull, without receiving any news or becoming aware of the reason for the delay, I resolved to leave Paris for London. This decision was partly be-

³ F. O., 72/45.

⁴ Copy, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

cause I wished to perform my duty in a task of such magnitude, and partly because I was convinced that in England I would not be denied hospitality. Beyond any doubt the hazard and the difficulties that confronted me were prodigious.”⁵

A wig and green spectacles disguised Miranda, when on January 3, 1798, he secretly departed from Paris. He explained to Turnbull that he used an old Russian passport and journeyed under the name of “Mirandow.” The incognito general reached Calais on January 7; four days later he embarked on a vessel that brought him to Dover. Miranda stated that upon examining his trunk, the customs officer was surprised to discover a secret compartment in which books and documents bearing his name were concealed. The traveler then made his identity known to the collector: his papers were sealed in a packet without anyone having read a word of them; and he wrote to Smith and Turnbull to announce his safe arrival.⁶ In a letter to Turnbull, Miranda said that he had been obliged to leave France because he was proscribed and that he was happy to have escaped the clutches of the Directory. “In the uncertainty of knowing where to find an asylum,” continued Miranda, “my protector Catherine being no more, I decided to come here.” He expressed his desire to proceed to London in order to renew his proposals to the English Government. He hoped that just as France had aided the English colonists in 1778, so would England now aid the Spanish colonists. Sentiment in the Spanish Indies, added Miranda, favored an insurrectionary movement. Then he mentioned the origins of his latest plan in these words:

“I recently met some friends at Paris who fixed upon bases for the absolute liberty and independence of Spanish America, which resembled those that brought about the indepen-

⁵ Undated memorandum, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

⁶ Miranda to Turnbull, Jan. 12, 1798; Miranda's undated memorandum, Mir. MSS., vol. 45. Cf. Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 318. On Dec. 24, 1796, Godoy had sent a premature warning to Marqués de Branciforte, viceroy of New Spain, that “the famous Spaniard Miranda,” who was in the pay of England, had embarked on an expedition against Mexico, A. G. N., reales cédulas, legajo 165.



Empress Catherine II. Anonymous portrait in the Musée de Versailles.

dence of the United States. They agreed that England should be well paid for the services which she is in a position to offer us but that she should not attempt to demand from us a monopoly of commerce. The coöperation of the North Americans is much desired; for they are our neighbors, our brothers in liberty, and, in fine, our own compatriots. I shall show you the instructions that I carry with me which contain a confirmation of what was done at Hollwood in 1790. I wish that a wise and liberal plan, like that which France had formed in 1792, and which we were upon the point of executing when the infernal genius of Robespierre overturned everything, would now be adopted by England in conjunction with the United States to promote the general welfare of the human race and the triumph of true liberty.”⁷

When Miranda's arrival at Dover was made known by Turnbull to the Prime Minister, his secretary sent the following epistle to that merchant: “Mr. Pitt is much obliged to you for sending him M. Miranda's Letter, and desires me to acquaint you that a Passport is sent to Dover to permit him to come to Town under his assumed Name.—Mr. Pitt will be in Town on Monday next at one o'clock, and should Mr. Miranda be arrived, he would be glad to see him at that time; but if it shall be thought by him more prudent to avoid observation as much as possible, Mr. Pitt will see him at any time between one and three on Tuesday next at Hollwood.”⁸ Miranda reached London on January 15. As he learned that Pitt was expecting to meet him at his country seat, he went there on the following day. The émigré thus described his reception by the Prime Minister:

“The porter immediately announced my arrival to Mr. Pitt who came to meet me without any delay. He received me in a very jovial and friendly fashion, congratulating me upon my happy arrival; he reminded me that about eight years ago in that very place we had met for the first time to consider the same important affair. However he stated that circum-

⁷ Jan. 12, 1798, *ibid.*

⁸ By J. Carthew, Jan. 13, 1798, *ibid.*, vol. 46.

stances were now quite different, for England was actually at war with Spain. I replied that these circumstances caused us to repeat or, in more appropriate words, to renew the negotiations of 1790 upon the identical affair.—‘All this is very well,’ he said, ‘but in the name of what persons or through what persons is your authorization given? and, could not a document be framed which, so far as possible, would take the form of your credentials in order that the affair might be conducted with greater regularity?’ I responded ‘that we had already anticipated both of these objections and that in order to meet them, so far as possible, we had agreed that my instructions should at the same time serve as credentials; that they were granted by the commissioners, deputies, and representatives of the Spanish-American colonies; and that all of them were in the packet which I had brought with me.’”⁹

That packet contained a copy of Miranda’s “instructions” and a letter dated January 16, 1798, which was addressed to Pitt. In this epistle Miranda described himself as the “principal agent of the Spanish-American colonies,” who had been appointed by a “junta of deputies” of Mexico, Peru, Chile, La Plata, Venezuela, and New Granada to renew with English ministers the relations of 1790. As a model to be followed in this transaction Miranda mentioned the Treaty of Alliance of February, 1778, between France and the United States. Hostilities between England and Spain, he declared, had induced him to leave his asylum at Paris in the conviction that the juncture was propitious for his negotiations.¹⁰

Miranda’s instructions purported to be articles signed by a revolutionary junta at Paris on December 22, 1797. They stated that the junta was composed of “deputies” who had been sent to Europe from the Spanish Indies to concert with him a project for the emancipation of their native land from the rule of Spain. The instructions alleged that the Spanish-American colonies, having unanimously resolved to proclaim their independence and to establish their liberty on a firm

⁹ Undated memorandum, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

¹⁰ Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 318-19.

basis, addressed themselves to the English Government and invited it to join them in promoting that enterprise. The assistance requested from England was not to exceed twenty-seven vessels of the line, eight thousand infantry, and two thousand cavalry. A defensive alliance of England, the United States, and the Spanish Indies was declared to be "the only hope which remained to liberty that had been so boldly outraged by the detestable maxims" avowed by France. A treaty of alliance was proposed that would concede to England commercial favors in Spanish America. After independence had been established, delegates from different sections of the emancipated domain should assemble to frame commercial regulations. Article XIII of these credentials intrusted to Francisco de Miranda not only the negotiations with England but also the military operations in America.

This instrument was framed in tentative terms. It did not state the sum that should be paid by liberated Spanish America to England for her assistance. It did not draw the boundaries of the projected state. It did not indicate what was to become of the Spanish West Indies. His country's views on these matters, said Miranda, were to be considered as secret instructions that should be formulated when they were adjusted by subsequent conferences.

These proposals provoke some tantalizing questions. What authorization had the deputies of Spanish America for their action? Who were its agents? The instructions bore the signatures of Francisco de Miranda, José del Pozo y Sucre, and Manuel José de Salas. There is a possibility that Pozo and Salas may have been Jesuits who had been expelled by Spain from the Spanish Indies.¹¹ Pablo de Olavide, who was to act as an agent with Miranda, was a native of Peru domiciled in Spain who had promoted the settlement of foreigners in the Sierra Morena. He was an erudite old man who entertained whimsical ideas about relations between North and South America. Although John Adams, who apparently knew him,

¹¹ Ch. MSS., bundle 345; draft in Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

scoffed at the idea that this Peruvian had any dealings with Miranda,¹² yet it is clear that in January, 1798, the Venezulean expected him to proceed from France to England.¹³ Possibly Olavide may have been authorized to act by a junta of Spanish Americans at Madrid.

As a basis for his proceedings Miranda might have adduced the vague authorization sent him from Caracas in 1782. While residing at Paris he had probably conversed with Nariño about the Spanish Indies; undoubtedly he had conferred with Caro. In a document by which Miranda on March 20, 1798, conferred certain powers upon the English mercantile house of Turnbull and Forbes, he complacently styled Caro and himself as commissioners of the continental Spanish-American colonies.¹⁴ Though the names of Olavide, Pozo, and Salas do not appear in a list of alleged agents of Spanish America that was carefully preserved by Miranda,¹⁵ yet it seems scarcely correct to assert, as did an anonymous informant of the French Government in London, that the idea of a representation of Spanish America as set forth in these instructions sprang entirely from the brain of the principal agent.¹⁶

Let us turn again to Miranda's account of his conference with the English Prime Minister:

"He perused my letter and the instructions with the greatest attention. When he reached the proposal of an alliance with the United States, he exclaimed in a tone of joyfulness and sincerity: 'We should much enjoy operating jointly with the United States in this enterprise! Do you know whether the Spanish Americans have made any such proposals to her?' 'I believe that they have not,' I responded, 'for if they

¹² Adams, *Works*, X, 143.

¹³ Miranda to Newport, Jan. 29, 1798, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

¹⁴ "Poder dado á Messrs. Turnbull y Forbes," *ibid.*, vol. 46.

¹⁵ "Nombres de algunos Comisarios de la América del Sur, venidos á Europa en diferentes épocas," *ibid.*, vol. 45.

¹⁶ O'Kelly de Galway, *Les généraux de la révolution*, pp. 109-10. In the article on "Miranda" by Martínez in *El Cojo Ilustrado*, V, 508, the statement is made that the Spanish-American emissaries who framed Miranda's instructions in Paris were Bejarano, Caro, Iznardi, and Nariño.

had done so, they would not have charged me with the task; and I promise you that I shall not take a single step in this matter until I receive a decision or a reply from you.' 'Very well,' he said to me, with an inclination of his head, and he read farther. * * * 'Does the article in which twenty ships of the line are requested from England,' he asked me with surprise, 'refer to ships in the West Indies?' I responded, 'Not only to vessels there but also to those in the South Sea and in other seas.' 'Very well,' he replied, 'for if it were not thus, the negotiations would end here, as it would be impossible for us to supply from the West Indies such large forces. However, we can furnish the aggregate number of ships required.'

" 'Then speaking about another point,' he added, 'although it is not England's ambition to interfere in any manner in the political system, what is the form of government that you aim to establish in Spanish America?' 'Very similar to that of Great Britain,' I responded, 'for it is to be composed of a house of commons, a house of nobles, and an Inca or hereditary sovereign.' 'Very well,' he said, 'because if you had intended to introduce a system like that of France into Spanish America * * *!' 'I assure you,' I interjected with emphasis, 'that we should prefer to see the Spanish Americans continue for a century under the oppressive rule of the king of Spain rather than to see them submerged in the calamities of the abominable French system.' 'Very well,' he said. 'Then,' I continued, 'It is efficacious to prevent such a contagion and to exclude Gallic influence that we have thought of immediate emancipation and of an alliance with England and the United States in order, if necessary, unitedly to contend against the monstrous and abominable principles of pretended French liberty. To show you that these are the same opinions which my compatriots profess, I have here a draft of a constitution that is believed to be most suited to the spirit and the opinions of our Americans, a project that the commissioners of Spanish America have sanctioned.' He read it with care; and when he came to the article concerning the hereditary Inca, he indicated his approval by nodding his head.

"At last he said to me: 'Indeed all is very good, and I do not perceive any impediment to it; but as this affair is very grave and momentous, I cannot say any more to you at present,—in

a short time you will receive a more formal and decisive reply!' I observed 'that the frank spirit with which I had proceeded encouraged the hope that the greatest promptness would be displayed in the consideration of this matter and that he should treat me in the same spirit.' 'Certainly,' he replied, 'it is always best to settle such matters promptly and with mutual satisfaction!' He then asked me when I had arrived in the city. I replied that I had only been in London since five o'clock yesterday. To me it appeared that this question had as its object to discover whether I had had time to frame a constitution and other projects after my arrival here, but my prompt reply apparently satisfied him. I told him that I did not wish to be deprived of the draft of the constitution, for I had no other copy. I only left it with him because of his keen desire to see it. * * * I was surprised at the extremely good reception that Pitt accorded me and at his entire forgetfulness of the acrimonious altercation with which our relations had terminated early in 1792."¹⁷

Partly because he believed him to be one of Alexander Hamilton's close friends, Miranda soon visited Rufus King who had become United States minister to London. Miranda told King that the English wished to cultivate friendly relations with the Americans and that, if England and the United States should be compelled to act jointly against France, it would be easy to separate the Spanish Indies from the Motherland. The Mississippi River would form a natural boundary between Spanish America and the United States.

Though King did not commit himself, yet he displayed so much interest that when he paid a visit to Miranda on February 8, the latter explained his plan for the liberation of Spanish America. The attack was to be made on the east side of the Isthmus of Darien. From England the South American wished to secure eight thousand seasoned infantry and two thousand cavalry, besides a naval squadron that was to be directed against the coast of Peru. From the United States he desired five thousand soldiers. As a recompense for her aid,

¹⁷ Undated memorandum, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

England was eventually to be paid thirty million pounds. Goods from England and the United States that might be transported across the Isthmus of Panama after the establishment of Spanish-American independence were to be charged lower tolls than the merchandise of other nations.¹⁸ As completed, Miranda's instructions proposed that the Spanish islands in the West Indies should be divided between England and the United States.¹⁹ King did not see the constitution prepared for Spanish America, for a note in the promoter's manuscripts states that the only copy of "this interesting document" was never returned by Pitt.²⁰ In Miranda's papers there is preserved the preamble to a treaty, which had perhaps been framed by Pownall, that bound the United States, the King of Great Britain, "and the Sovereign States of the Spanish People of America" to act against France in a "Triple Alliance."²¹

A vast and revolutionary project indeed was that envisaged by the embittered and imaginative Venezuelan exile,—one which aimed to link together the two Anglo-Saxon nations in opposition to "the pernicious doctrines" of the French Revolution and in aid of such dissatisfied colonists as might dare to strike a blow for independence from their Spanish masters! France, as well as Spain, was to be deprived of the illimitable resources of the Indies, while the coöperating nations were to insure a transit to world commerce across the Isthmus!

Miranda evidently felt the need of advice in regard to his actions; hence he wrote to his old friend Pownall. In response that enthusiast spurred him on and made some precautionary suggestions in this veiled fashion:

"Now therefore teach yourself to believe, that Providence has extricated you out of all these Evils, and preserved you for

¹⁸ King, *Life and Correspondence*, III, 558-59. ¹⁹ Adams, *Works*, I, 679-84.

²⁰ "Esquisse de Constitution 4.6., este papel se le entrego Original á Mr. Pitt en la Conferencia que huvimos á mi arrivo aqui (Eno. de 1798) en Hollwood—Le parecio tan bien que me rogo se lo dexase criando que con aquello se allanarian todas las dificultades; mas sucedio al contrario, que ni yo tuve mas respuesta en el asunto—ni puede recoger mas este Papel interesante," Mir. MSS., vol. 46. ²¹ Endorsed "Preamble to Triple Alliance," *ibid.*

some great purpose; and never cease to look to it: Consider the miseries and sufferings which you have experienced not only for six years, but for many more years back, as intended by that Providence to train and discipline you to a Character equal to some grand Rôle in the Drama of the World, I mean, the New World.—*Vive la liberté dans le Nouveau Monde.* * * * I perfectly comprehend what the intimation in your letter points to. And I most earnestly beg to guard you against making any *confidential* communication to me, *by Letters*. Believe me there can not be any assured safety and certainty in such conveyance. * * * There are some Cautions which I wish to make to you as necessary to your own Safety and Honor in your engagements in Service; and of the utmost importance towards your carrying such service into execution effectually: But they are of that nature which I will not put to paper.”²²

However, Lord Grenville, a cousin of William Pitt and secretary of state for foreign affairs, informed King confidentially that he did not favor the immediate execution of Miranda's projects. In the middle of February that Minister told King that the cabinet had decided to retain Miranda in England, but that it would not promote the independence of Spanish America unless there was imminent danger that Spain would pass under the sway of France.²³ Mingled with this sentiment, we may assume, there was the apprehension of a Napoleonic invasion,—a menace that made a vivid impression upon Englishmen. Among the burlesque pictures by which the gifted English artist, James Gillray, depicted that phase of the titanic struggle was a caricature entitled “Consequences of a Successfull French Invasion.” In this cartoon the betrayed and tattered “English Republicans” of divers classes were depicted as being driven to work in a field of garlic, as being fed on *soupe maigre*, and sheltered in pigsties.

Ever watchful for an opportunity that might advance his master design, on March 20, 1798, Miranda addressed an important note to the Prime Minister:

²² Feb. 11, 1798, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

²³ King, III, 558, 561.



J. Gillray del.

London: Printed and Sold by Wm. Miller, 17, St. James's Street.

Vol. 4. — 1. The French de English Republicans to work. — Scene. A Ploughed Field.

“Consequences of a Successful French Invasion.” Cartoon by James Gillray. From Wright, “The Works of James Gillray.”

"The undersigned, the principal agent of the Spanish-American colonies, having learned by private advices as well as by public reports of the critical condition in which Spain is actually placed by a threatened French invasion that menaces the government with an anarchic convulsion, believes that this will precipitate another convulsion in the New World; for the Spanish colonists, finding themselves loosened from the bonds which unite them to the Mother Country, will be compelled to seek a new system of government. According to this hypothesis it appears inevitable that, unless prompt and efficacious measures are taken during the interval which will elapse before a new system can be formed the anarchic and subversive principles of the French régime will slip in. Hence his colleagues and compatriots have sent the undersigned to the ministers of His Britannic Majesty and of the United States in order to avert by wise and vigorous measures a catastrophe which would be as lamentable for the New World as fatal for the Old.

"He sees with regret the delay, which is probably necessary, that the government has made in granting him a conference or a response to the frank overtures which he had the honor to submit on January 16 to the Honorable William Pitt. He believes that the aid of six or eight ships of the line from England and four or five thousand soldiers from the United States would be all that is necessary for his purpose at the present moment, for it is probable that a rupture between the United States and France is not far distant.

"Because of this reason the undersigned has believed that he would only fulfill the desires of his constituents by dispatching to Bogotá a compatriot who is actually with him so that he might inform other compatriots about the actual condition of affairs and that they might grant him authority or give him other instructions. This agent will also be directed to proceed to Philadelphia with letters from Minister King in order that he may make overtures to the United States Government as proposed by Articles IX to XII of the instructions.

"The undersigned hopes that these preparations will merit the approbation of the honorable Minister; and, as they will not be executed until eight or ten days have elapsed when the vessel that should transport Don Pedro Caro to Philadelphia

will sail, any correction or arrangement which Mr. Pitt may judge proper to indicate can be accomplished without inconvenience.

"P. S. The accompanying estimates of the population and products of Spanish America have been sent me by commissioners of that country who have based it upon the best available and most recent information."²⁴

Data preserved among Miranda's papers enable us to learn the basis for his views. Estimates, which were apparently taken from reports of the Council of the Indies for 1774, indicated that the population of Spanish America, including the Spanish West Indies, amounted to 10,250,000. Miranda considered these figures too low. He calculated that, including the barbarous as well as the civilized Indians, there was in the Spanish Indies in 1797 a population of 18,150,000. He expressed the opinion that Spanish America could furnish a quota of men for military service which would aggregate 1,750,000. He reckoned the amount of gold and silver annually coined in Mexico, Central America, New Granada, Peru, and La Plata at 64,000,000 pesos. He estimated that the annual imports into Spanish America aggregated 24,000,000 pesos, while goods worth an equal sum were introduced as contraband.²⁵

The compatriot whom Miranda decided to send to South America was Pedro Caro. Miranda's "Secret Instructions" to Caro, a translation of which passed into the hands of the English ministers, furnish other details about the design that was being hatched. Caro was directed to proceed to the United States and to deliver a letter from Miranda to Alexander Hamilton and a letter from King to Timothy Pickering, who was secretary of state. The agent was to obtain an audience with President Adams in which he should insist on a prompt answer to his master's proposals. Then he was to proceed to New Granada where he should inform the colonists about political conditions in Europe and the United States. He was

²⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

²⁵ "Vista política de la América Española," *ibid.*, vol. 45.

to urge revolutionary sympathizers at all cost to prevent the introduction of the principles of the French Revolution lest liberty should find there a grave instead of a cradle. The instructions further provided that after these sympathizers were informed of the favorable attitude of England and the United States toward Spanish-American independence they should await the appearance of an expedition at the places agreed upon for "proclaiming our Independence and Sovereignty under a Form of wise, just, and equilibrated Government which may make us in a very little Time the happiest and most respectable Nation upon Earth." Miranda continued as follows:

"Some respectable and capable persons should be sent to me immediately as well to Philadelphia as to the Island of Trinidad, to assist me both in the military and political way. By them fresh Powers should also be sent, more legalized than the former ones, or at least a more ample confirmation of them, and it should be a general Rule not to make use of people of little Worth, because having Nothing to lose they risk all and finish by destroying the very Edifice they apparently wished to raise,—the French Revolution is the best proof of this assertion! Whereas if Men of Property and Integrity are named, everything they do will prosper from the Interest they have in consolidating a Government of Laws that may be the Protector of Property and Personal Liberty, the basis of all civil Happiness, and in which the general Utility of all may be found to be exactly united.—Proof, the Revolution of America, which is the most evident Example, and the strongest Contrast to French Atrocity that can be presented; but it is not meant by this ever to exclude Virtue and Talents in whatever Individual they may be found united.—'For commanding (says Saavedra) Science is necessary, for obeying, a common Understanding, and sometimes Ignorance alone, is sufficient.' " 28

As his agent was unable to sail from Falmouth promptly, near the end of April, 1798, Miranda altered his plans. He in-

²⁸ April 6, 1798, F. O., 72/45.

structed Caro to proceed directly to the West Indies and thence to New Granada. The emissary was to forward the letters addressed to Hamilton and Knox through Secretary Pickering.²⁷ In his letter to President Adams, Miranda included a copy of his perfected instructions. He capitalized at a high value the assurances which Pitt had let fall, and asserted that his propositions had been very favorably received by English ministers. He attributed their delay to an expectation that the United States would sever relations with France and to a desire to act with the American Republic to establish Spanish-American independence. He expressed fear that the introduction of French soldiers into Spain might promote the spread of the principles of the French Revolution in the Spanish Indies.²⁸ Not only did Miranda mention the assistance that he required to initiate the insurrection but he sketched his frame of government. He inclosed estimates that probably dealt with the population and resources of the Spanish Indies. On May 21, 1798, he addressed a letter to Pitt to inform him of Caro's mission, to request another conference, and to urge the necessity of a prompt decision. The packet addressed to Pickering was forwarded by Caro from Falmouth to a correspondent of Turnbull at Philadelphia who transmitted it to the Secretary of State.²⁹

Meantime the promoter had also attempted to interest Alexander Hamilton in his project. On February 7, 1798, he had written to that leader of the Federalist party to inform him of his purpose in leaving Paris for London. Miranda expressed the opinion that, unless a miracle took place, the proscriptions of the 18th Fructidor would give the coup de grâce to French liberty. He asserted that "the entire Spanish-American Continent seems prepared to throw off the yoke in a wise and reasonable manner and to enter into an alliance with the United

²⁷ Miranda to Caro, April 25, 1798, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

²⁸ Adams, *Works*, VIII, 569-72.

²⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 46; Aguilar, "Aportaciones á la biografía del precursor de la independencia sur-americana," in *Boletín del centro de estudios americanistas de Sevilla*, año V, no. 19, p. 12, note 4.

States and England. It is to promote this object that I came here: I cannot say more to you at the present moment; but I hope that you will soon learn more. * * * I believe that we will ultimately gain a victory for our cause and thus promote the happiness of the New World as well as the tranquillity of the Old.”³⁰ The lapse of years had doubtless chilled Hamilton’s ardor for the independence of the Spanish Indies, for on this letter he wrote the following cautious but critical comment:

“Several years ago this man was in America much heated with the project of liberating S. Am. from the Spanish Domination.

“I had frequent conversation with him on the subject and I presume expressed ideas favorable to the object and perhaps gave an opinion that it was one to which the Ustates would look with interest—He went then to England upon it—Hence his present letter. I shall not answer because I consider him as an intriguing adventurer.”³¹

Ignorant of the change in Hamilton’s attitude, on April 6 Miranda wrote another letter to him from which we take the following paragraph:

“This will be given to you, my dear and respected friend, by my compatriot, Don Pedro José de Caro, who is intrusted with dispatches of the utmost importance for the President of the United States. He will tell you confidentially what you wish to learn about the subject. It appears that the moment of our emancipation approaches and that the establishment of Liberty over all the Continent of the New World is confided to us by Providence! The only danger that I foresee is the introduction of French principles, which would poison Liberty in the cradle, and which would soon culminate in the destruction of your Liberty; but, if we take wise precautions in time, everything will go well. * * * It is agreed that the form of government is to be mixed. I hope that you will not refuse to join us when the moment arrives. At least I am sure that your Greek predecessor Solon would not have refused;

³⁰ Ham. MSS., vol. 20, f. 208.

³¹ *Ibid.*, f. 209.

and it is possible that I shall go soon to take you myself! There is another person in the United States whom I know by reputation and whom I believe could render us very important services in a military way: that is General H. Lee of Virginia. As I received at the opening of the Revolution in France, through my friend Colonel W. S. Smith, a letter from Lee who was very desirous of entering the French service, I flatter myself that he would not refuse to join us now, when it is an affair of true liberty which we all love and of the welfare of his compatriots of Peru and Mexico. * * * Will our friend Knox come? I should be charmed to learn this but I fear not.”³²

Minister King added fuel to the flames that had been lit in London. On April 2 in a cipher dispatch to Pinckney, Marshall, and Gerry, the Americans who had been sent to negotiate with Talleyrand, he informed them that if England did not revolutionize the Spanish Indies, France would introduce her system there which would be extremely dangerous to the United States.³³ Instead of dealing with these commissioners directly, however, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs introduced them to certain confidants—styled in the published correspondence as X, Y, and Z—who explained that a bribe was needed to facilitate negotiations. On May 15 King wrote a letter to Miranda to call his attention to a résumé of the dispatches from the American agents to France that had just been published in the newspapers. Private advices from the United States, he declared, were to the effect that because of the publication of the X Y Z correspondence public opinion had united in favor of the President, and the opposition in Congress had decided to support his aggressive policy. Then he went on to say that money was “voted to equip Ships of War, to raise Troops, to replenish the arsenals, to repair and compleat the Fortifications, and an armed Vessel dispatched to France to bring away the Envoys.”³⁴ In letters to Hamil-

³² Ham. MSS., vol. 20, f. 210; *Ed. Rev.*, XIII, 291.

³⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

³³ King, II, 300-1.

ton the Minister declared that because of conditions on the European Continent the United States was being forced into an offensive war. He argued that the destiny of the New World would thus be placed in her hands.³⁵ On August 1 King sent an enthusiastic letter to Miranda stating that his advices from home exhibited "a fine Picture of what France has not yet seen; a nation of freemen rising with scorn and arms against her!"³⁶

On August 22, 1798, Alexander Hamilton wrote to King about Miranda's scheme. Hamilton declared that he wished it to be undertaken and that he desired to see "the principal agency" in the United States which was "to furnish the whole land force necessary. The command in this case would very naturally fall upon me—and I hope I should disappoint no favorable anticipation. The independency of the separated territory under a *moderate* government, with the joint guarantee of the coöperating powers, stipulating equal privileges in commerce would be the sum of the results to be accomplished." Yet the Federalist politician expressed the opinion that the United States was not ready for the enterprise. Inclosed in the letter was a note addressed to Miranda that was to be delivered by King if he judged this procedure discreet. In it Hamilton declared that he could not participate in the emancipation of Spanish America unless that undertaking was patronized by the United States. He suggested that during the approaching winter his government might decide to coöperate. He sharply outlined the revolutionary project by stating that there should be a fleet from England, an army from the United States, and a government for the emancipated Spanish colonies which would suit both coöperating nations.³⁷

From this letter the American Minister as well as the agent of South America drew fresh inspiration. King replied to Hamilton on October 20, 1798, to assert that England was prepared to coöperate precisely as he desired.³⁸ On October

³⁵ King, II, 656-57. ³⁶ Mir. MSS., vol. 46. ³⁷ King, II, 659-63. ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 662.

19 Miranda sent an urgent letter to Caro imploring him to come to London from Portugal where he had been stranded.³⁹ On the same day he sent an epistle to Knox in which he expressed the hope that Providence would enable them to profit wisely by existing circumstances. "In fine," said Miranda, "everything seems to favor the execution of our projects of the year 1784. I expect that you will carry out your promises and that I shall soon have the honor of taking you to our country."⁴⁰ This epistle was enclosed in a letter to Hamilton which stated that with regard to the coöperating land and naval forces the wishes which Miranda had expressed in his letter of August 22 had been to an extent fulfilled. We quote the significant passages:

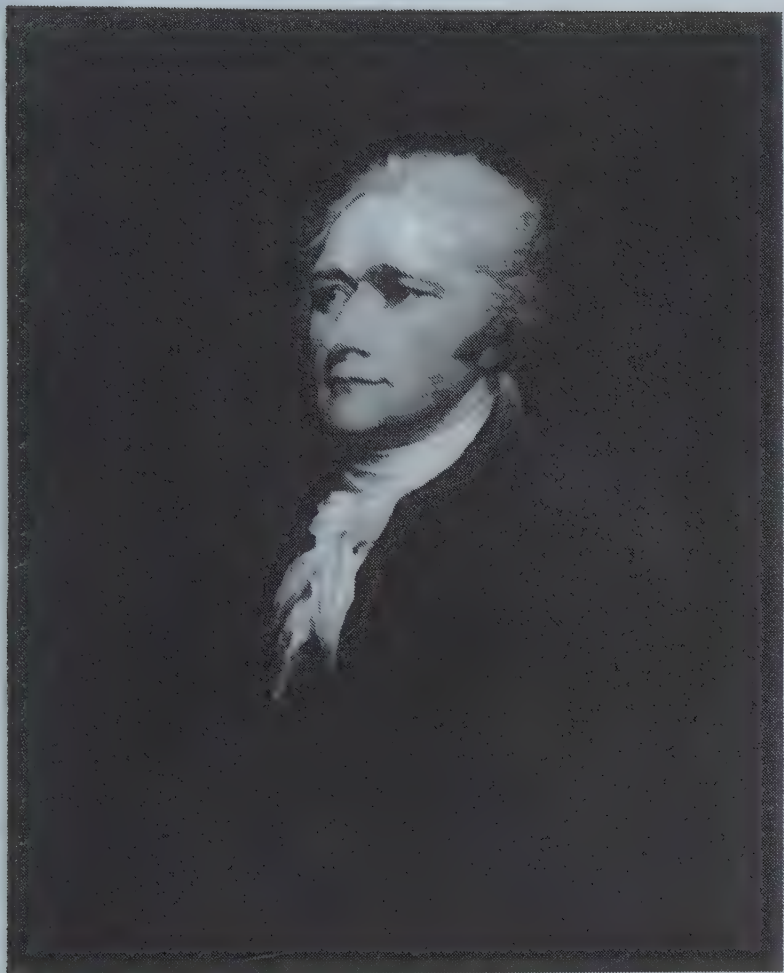
"All is approved, and we await only the fiat of your illustrious President to depart like lightning. In effect, the moment appears most favorable and the latest events seem to leave us a vast and tranquil field in which we can act to our entire satisfaction. Let us profit with wisdom by the nature of the circumstances and render to our country the greatest service that a mortal is capable of offering to his fellow beings. Let us save America from the frightful calamities that in overturning a large portion of the World threaten the destruction of the portions still remaining intact. I ask you to forward the enclosed letter to our mutual friend General Knox, whose appointment in the army brought me the greatest pleasure.—May you always continue, my dear friend, to be the benefactor of the human race that never had so much need of similar support! Let us unite ourselves firmly to secure the health of our dear country, and perhaps in rescuing it from the threatening evil, we will save the entire World which staggers on the edge of an abyss!"⁴¹

It was after receiving this letter that Hamilton wrote to a friend that if the United States should engage in war, her game would be to attack where she could. "France is not to be considered as separated from her ally. Tempting objects

³⁹ Miranda to Caro, Aug. 17, 1798, *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 46.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 45.

⁴¹ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 519.



Alexander Hamilton. Painting by John Trumbull. In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

will be within our grasp.”⁴² Meantime Miranda undertook to sketch plans for military operations against the Spanish Indies. These projects were based upon the assumption that England and the United States would coöperate to insure Spanish-American independence. A salient part of his memoir runs thus:

“The emancipation of Spanish America has been demanded for more than eighteen years by almost all the inhabitants of the country. This liberation is a political task that I am certain can never be undertaken with more likelihood of success than under the present circumstances. At a juncture when almost all the ports of France and Spain are blockaded, when the United States, having solemnly decided against France and consequently against her ally Spain, has fully decided to act in concert with Great Britain to wreak the greatest possible injuries upon her enemies, what measure would be easier and at the same time more effective than to detach from Spain an immense dominion with a population and richness which constitute a mass of resources that by a counter stroke could be turned to the advantage of France in whose interests Spain is so blindly involved?”⁴³

He analyzed the situation and based his hope of success on three factors: the weak defenses of the principal points that were to be attacked; the disloyal attitude of many Spanish commanders; and the favorable disposition of the colonists. He maintained that “the desire of the Spanish Americans for an emancipation which would render them entirely independent of the Motherland” was proved by their rebellions against Spanish rule. He mentioned the success of certain revolutionists in New Granada who actually succeeded in compelling Spanish officials to sign an agreement that pledged their government to make specific reforms. He asserted that manifestations of discontent in Spanish America had become so pronounced that when the people decided to establish their inde-

⁴² Hamilton, *Works*, VI, 136.

⁴³ “Plan militar formado en Londres en Agosto, 1798,” *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 46.

pendence they would accomplish it despite all opposition. He alleged that the regular soldiers there were mostly creoles who were discontented with the Spanish régime.

Miranda next outlined a plan of military operations. He suggested that to divert the enemy's attention from the main objective point a feint might be made against Habana or Santiago de Cuba. The first move was to be against Chagres on the Isthmus of Panama that should be invested by American soldiers who were to rendezvous at Grenada or Trinidad under the escort of English warships. A feint might also be made against the city of Caracas. "The province of which this city is the capital," asserted Miranda, "is generally considered to be the most dissatisfied with the Spanish Government." He maintained that the real attack in northern South America, however, should be against a weakly defended fort in the Viceroyalty of New Granada, a strategic post which he declared was only ten or twelve leagues from Panama. Once master of that Viceroyalty, urged the revolutionary, "it will be necessary to circulate in the country a proclamation explaining to the inhabitants the object of the operations and inviting them to join the invaders as soon as possible. There is hope that those commissioners who are scattered through this extensive territory will have brought matters to such a pass that as soon as an armed force appears the people will rise *en masse* to join it."

In order to control the navigation of the Magdalena River the town of Santa Marta should be captured. The important city of Cartagena, however, should not be invested without the assistance of siege artillery and the support of English warships. Once that port fell into the hands of the attacking forces, declared Miranda, the inhabitants of the neighboring provinces would flock to the insurrectionary standard. The following extracts further explain his military plan:

"However certain one might be of the favorable disposition of the inhabitants, it will be necessary to neglect nothing which may strengthen them in that determination. Accord-

ingly upon the capitulation of Cartagena, it will be advisable to dispatch three ships of the line and some frigates to Buenos Aires in order to keep Spanish forces out of that important gateway from which by land they could attack Chile and even Peru. It will also be necessary as soon as possible to induce the British Government to send a squadron of four vessels of the line and some frigates to cruise in the Pacific Ocean between Lima and Acapulco. There is no doubt that the spirit of independence will soon spread from one end of South America to the other. The province of Chile in the South and of Venezuela in the North, which are almost at the extremities of the Continent, are generally considered as the countries where the inhabitants most ardently desire emancipation.

"With respect to other northern provinces of South America and also Mexico, it is certain that the people who inhabit them are at least as ripe for independence as those whom we have considered. * * * It will be convenient to leave Mexico to the last. The establishment of independence in that rich country will crown the important work which it now proposed. Her proximity to the United States and the ease with which the chief settlements can be attacked in the rear from Acapulco doubtless assure success." ⁴⁴

This plan is obviously the one which Caro, who played false to his master, subsequently informed the government of Spain was presented by Miranda to the English cabinet in September, 1798.⁴⁵ In his decision to make the initial attack near the Isthmus of Panama, Miranda was probably influenced by his knowledge of conditions in northern South America. Among his papers there is found in Pownall's handwriting the draft of a summons to a town, a fortress, or a citadel demanding its surrender on behalf of the sovereign and independent people of South America.⁴⁶ In outlining his plan of campaign, as well as in writing to Hamilton, Miranda's enthusiasm had carried him much farther than circumstances warranted.

⁴⁴ "Plan militar formado en Londres en Agosto, 1798," Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

⁴⁵ Aguilar, "Aportaciones á la biografía del precursor de la independencia sur-americana," *loc. cit.*, año V, no. 19, pp. 19-23.

⁴⁶ "Clause in the Summons," Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

Despite the advice of Governor Picton who proposed that an attack should be made on Cumaná in which expatriated Venezuelans could be used, not yet convinced that France would ultimately absorb Spain, and apprehensive of a Napoleonic invasion, English ministers were reluctant to light the revolutionary tinder that Miranda averred was scattered throughout South America.

Yet England might have changed her policy, if the United States had decided to execute the project. Though President Adams weighed Miranda's proposals carefully when they were presented to him for the third time, yet he made no reply. While some Federalist leaders were reluctant to engage in hostilities against France, others were loath to enter into an alliance with England. Further, on September 28, 1798, Talleyrand informed the United States that he would receive a minister from that country with the respect due to the representative of a free, independent, and powerful nation. A train of circumstances was thus set off that culminated in a treaty between the United States and France in the year 1800.

Though Miranda was ignorant of the circumstances which enabled President Adams to negotiate peace with France, yet he must have felt that his chances of success were waning. Another event that presumably operated against the immediate execution of his plans was the formation of the Second Coalition of England, Austria, Naples, Russia, and Turkey against France. In January, 1799, Miranda asked the English Government for a passport to proceed to the West Indies. Doubtless this request was inspired by the thought that in Trinidad, where revolutionaries from South America had taken refuge, he might secure efficacious aid in the execution of his project.⁴⁷ The passport was not granted, however, and Miranda lingered in London.

On March 19, 1799, he presented a memorial to Pitt in which he again pleaded the cause of the Spanish Indies. He

⁴⁷ King, II, 663-64. On the attitude of Secretary Pickering to Miranda's project see Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 335-36.

expressed the hope that a declaration of war by the United States against France would be the signal for a proclamation of Spanish-American independence. He affirmed that by this time Caro had arrived in the New World and had transmitted news of his negotiations to emissaries who would spread it throughout the South American Continent. He also asked an embarrassing question:

“What will be the result when in place of the succor so long expected and so often promised it becomes known that England now says that she cannot furnish the least aid or hold out the least hope? It is difficult to judge of the effect which despair will provoke under such circumstances; but it is certain that those wise and intelligent persons who have flattered themselves that they would see established on the South American Continent a system of order and morality which might counteract the disorganizing maxims spread by France will be much disheartened and lowered in the estimation of Spanish America; that their interests and the future safety of the United States will be gravely compromised; and that the commercial and other advantages which this immense Continent offers to Great Britain will really be lost to her. On the other hand, if one imagines that in order to carry out its views of invasion and expansion, the versatile genius of the French Directory is capable of wreaking its vengeance upon the United States as well as upon Great Britain, with the colossal and revolutionary power that it unfortunately possesses at the present juncture one naturally trembles at the fate of the human race!”⁴⁸

A despondent tone pervades this memoir. After waiting fourteen months for a decision Miranda declared that only on that day had he learned indirectly that England was not able to offer any prospect of coöperation in the emancipation of the Spanish Indies. Yet, apparently still indulging in the hope of assistance from the United States, Minister King forwarded a copy of this plea to Secretary Pickering. However neither Miranda's appeal to Pitt nor King's appeal to

⁴⁸ Copy, Pick. MSS., vol. 24, f. 150 ff.

Pickering evoked any response. It is possible that, if President Adams had decided to favor Miranda's designs, England might have equipped a fleet for an attack on South America. In spite of the attitude of Hamilton, however, other prominent Federalists in the United States were unwilling to join hands with England against France. They were still anxious to abide by the teachings of Washington. Left to her own devices and harassed by the fear of a French invasion, the contingency of the absorption of Spain by France was the pivot on which the policy of England toward Spanish America revolved. Thus the prospect of a tripartite alliance for the liberation of the Spanish Indies faded away.

Still these experiences were not altogether unprofitable to Miranda. He had improved his acquaintance with influential English statesmen. He was undoubtedly one of the first men of his age to appreciate the relation of the Spanish Indies to the titanic struggle which was being waged between England and France. Rightly did he divine that England's mercantile activities would impel her to take a keen interest in the separation of the Spanish colonies from the Motherland. He professed to dread the introduction of Gallic principles into Spanish America; he wished to anticipate any tendency of that sort by starting a revolution there by the aid of England. Yet the apprehension of a French invasion of England as well as the fear of precipitating in South America scenes like those that had stained the Revolution in France deterred English ministers and caused them to postpone action.

Miranda's attempt to include the United States in his grand alliance shows that he appreciated the perennial interest which some of her statesmen took in the fortunes of the Spanish dominions. The proposals which the promoter urged upon President Adams were based upon the hypothesis that the United States was still a dependency of the European state system. Although Miranda failed to engage American statesmen in his vast design, yet he rightly understood the yearning of leading personages of the United States toward

the rich but decaying empire of Spain in America. This sympathetic yet interested attitude is a factor that should be appreciated by the historian who would rightly interpret the New Republic during the administrations of Washington and Adams, as well as later.

Chapter IX

NEW AFFILIATIONS AND FRESH FINANCIERING

As WAS his custom at this epoch, Miranda confided his sentiments to writing. In a diarial note dated May 3, 1799, he wrote this commentary about his treatment by English ministers:

“As I had asked for a passport for the island of Trinidad or for the United States, and had become aware that they did not wish to grant me this, excusing themselves with a thousand subterfuges, I had recourse to my friends, Count Woronzow, who is at present in high favor, and Mr. King, the American Minister, who is a favorite of his government. Eventually through their influence Mr. Wickham answered to Mr. King on the 26th that His Majesty’s Council had at last decided that, in view of all the circumstances, it would grant me the passport which I had requested for Trinidad and thence to the adjacent Continent for the purpose desired. To us this concession seemed to be a great point gained, and Count Woronzow encouraged me to take this step; for, if a post should be captured in South America, we should soon gain supporters. This good friend added that if it were not for the odd genius of Paul I, or if the Empress Catherine still lived, he would procure for me two Russian frigates and two thousand soldiers which were all that would be necessary.

“While we were in this mood and urging Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt to grant me the passport, which now appeared dubious to us because Mr. Wickham was preparing to journey to the Continent, it happened that one morning there appeared in my room a Mr. McArthur, a person whom I knew only casually, in company with a naval officer called Captain Graves. They came to propose a step which they believed would please me, namely, that I should sail with English war-ships and land on the coast of South America as the Washington of that Continent. Cautiously and without eagerness

I responded to the proposition; I postponed a discussion of it to another occasion.”¹

The notion of Captain Thomas Graves apparently was that England should furnish Miranda with arms, munitions, some officers, and a small naval force “in order to promote the liberty and independence of the Spanish colonies on the American Continent from which there would flow to England more honor and profit than from the bloody and expensive European war.” The captain’s idea naturally pleased Miranda, they formulated a project for a South American expedition, and Graves brought the scheme to the attention of Lord Spencer, first lord of the admiralty, and other government officials. However Miranda recorded that, as he had expected, Lord Spencer shattered their hopes, and that in consequence he again undertook to request a passport. But William Huskisson, under secretary of war, declared that no order had been given to issue such a permit, “and added ‘that General Miranda had recently become an object of suspicion to the government.’ Behold how despotism always seeks to arm itself in its calumny in order to find fault with one who is blameless!”² Such was the egoist’s bitter comment!

Subsequently Miranda repeated his efforts to leave England. On May 25, 1799, he reminded Wickham of the desired passport for Trinidad or the United States.³ A month later the indigent petitioner wrote to Mr. Flint at the Alien Office to state that about two weeks earlier he had for the third time asked permission to proceed “to the United States where he had been offered an asylum against the proscriptions of the French Directory and its Allies.” He complained that his long delay in England had reduced him to “the dreadful alternative of contracting debts or soliciting alms.”⁴ On July 1 Miranda sent Pitt copies of his notes to Wickham and Flint. He alleged that the extraordinary delays in granting his legitimate request proved that there was a prejudice against

¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 46. ² *Diario*, *ibid.* ³ Ch. MSS., bundle 160. ⁴ *Ibid.*

him. Hence he appealed to the Prime Minister to expedite the granting of his passport.⁵ There is no doubt that Miranda again had to eat crow; for in August, 1799, Rufus King made an attempt to get permission for him to leave England: in extenuation of his efforts, King pleaded Miranda's pecuniary embarrassments. Though the Venezuelan seems to have secured passage on the ship *Washington* for America, and though the American Minister even wrote a letter to Colonel Pickering introducing him as a man of "uncommon Talents and rare acquirements"; yet in October 18, King added a postscript to the effect that his friend could not secure permission to sail for the United States.⁶

During these tantalizing experiences, either through friendships that he formed in London or through correspondence with sympathizers in the West Indies, Miranda was steadily improving his relations with Spanish Americans. After Caro reached Trinidad, where he assumed the alias of "Josef de Oquendo y Atney," he communicated with Miranda to inform him about conditions on that island as well as about tendencies on the neighboring Continent. On February 19, 1799, the emissary wrote his chief to declare that Venezuela was still much agitated and that only two thousand men and a leader were necessary to insure success for the revolutionary cause. Six days later Caro stated that with the aid of the governor of Trinidad he expected soon to depart from the island, but that he was disturbed because of the lack of recent news of Miranda.⁷ On April 21 the Cuban reported that he was planning to leave Trinidad for South America in disguise. He added that he was transmitting to Miranda a valuable map of the Isthmus of Panama.⁸ On April 29 Caro discerningly expressed his views about conditions in the province of Caracas. He lamented the fact that the Venezuelans neither had a concerted plan nor did they "work with foresight. They

⁵ Ch. MSS., bundle 160. ⁶ King, II, 664-65. ⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

⁸ *Ibid.* On the map see Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 517-18; it is found in A. N. F⁷, 6285, no. 5819.

are better prepared to change their masters than to become free. They believe that it is the same to acclaim independence as to be independent and that independence will be accomplished simply by rejecting the yoke of Spain and placing themselves under the protection of any other nation.”⁹

On May 12 Caro assured Miranda that merely with the aid of their friends in the West Indies they could undertake the arduous task of emancipation. “A gust of wind would be enough to kindle the fire.”¹⁰ Two days later he added that their last recourse would be to start the revolution alone: “a dilatory system exposes us to many risks; the secret will become known.”¹¹ On June 3, 1799, Miranda replied to Caro declaring that audacity was necessary for the execution of their enterprise; that they ought to strike at Spanish power at the proper moment; and that he expected soon to embark for Trinidad. On September 2 he wrote to this conspirator to explain that he was trying to obtain permission to go to the United States and to instruct him to join his compatriots without delay.¹²

However the mysterious movements of Caro soon rendered him an object of suspicion to Governor Picton of Trinidad. That governor believed him to be an emissary from the court of Madrid who had inveigled himself into Miranda’s confidence. In the midsummer of 1799 Picton accordingly ordered him to leave the island.¹³ Hence Caro was deported to London. There he soon attempted to secure a bonus from the English Government. Apparently in a contented mood, early in May, 1800, he left London on a strange mission to Hamburg.¹⁴ The sequel, however, proved either that he had become dissatisfied with the financial emoluments which Miranda allotted him or else that he had become weary of his rôle.

From Hamburg on May 31, 1800, Caro sent a humble petition to Charles IV in which he deplored his disloyalty. He as-

⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 46. ¹⁰ *Ibid.* ¹¹ *Ibid.* ¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Picton to Dundas, Sept. 28, 1800, C. O., 295/1.

¹⁴ Miranda to Vargas, May 8, 1800, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

sented that his treasonable acts were due to disappointment over his failure to secure employment or fortune in the King's service. Of Miranda's credentials Caro declared that although at first he had believed them to be authentic, yet time and circumstances had made him aware of their farcical character. In regard to the promoter's governmental plans he said that an "Inca-Dictator" was to rule over liberated Spanish America on behalf of the future supreme ruler who was to be none other than Miranda himself. Caro besought the King to pardon his treason and either to permit him to pass the rest of his life in a remote corner of the earth or else to allow him to expiate his crime in the royal service.¹⁵ That mercenary adventurer thus flits out of our story.

The principal Spanish-American agent also carried on a correspondence with his boyhood friend, Manuel Gual, who had escaped from Venezuela upon the discovery of his complicity in a revolutionary conspiracy. On July 12, 1799, Gual wrote to Miranda from the West Indies to declare that, since the failure of the uprising against Spanish rule in 1797, the desire for independence had only increased in Venezuela, that to accomplish its liberation the enterprise only needed to be launched with English aid, and that he desired no greater honor than to serve under Miranda's orders. On September 30 following, Miranda sent a copy of this epistle to Secretary Dundas, accompanied by a plea for aid that his fellow conspirator had presented to the English commander at the Windward Islands.¹⁶ In a postscript to his note to Gual of October 4, 1799, Miranda gave an introspective exposé of his own ambitions:

"So far as regards my person, my friend, it will always be at the service of my country for which I have already made such sacrifices that it would be absurd for me now to abandon the enterprise. No matter what post might be assigned me, it would be acceptable and honorable so long as the other per-

¹⁵ A. G. I., audiencia de Caracas, legajo 4.

¹⁶ Castlereagh, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, VII, 273-75.

sons concerned marched toward the goal of our liberty and independence. The influence of no foreign power whatever should be allowed to interfere in the management of the country; for in such a case Spanish America would be coveted and despoiled by any other maritime powers that desired to engage in a partition. May God prevent this! Finally, my friend, the true glory of all Spanish Americans will consist in the consummation of this enterprise. We have two grand examples before our eyes: the American Revolution, and the French Revolution; let us discreetly imitate the first; but let us avoid with the greatest care the fatal effects of the second.”¹⁷

On February 4, 1800, Gual wrote to Miranda and declared that a smile from their native land was more precious than all the perfidious favors of tyrants. He inquired when the day would arrive upon which he would be able to embrace his friend,—a glorious day when they would be able to march against the Spaniards who tormented and dishonored Venezuela. He vowed that only after he had beheld that day could he “die content. I desire that you should be convinced of the ease with which the revolt may be undertaken. Because of the atrocious oppression of those monsters, the enterprise needs only a slight impetus. I expect that the breach once begun will be made absolute by the lance of Achilles.”¹⁸

A month later Miranda wrote optimistically to Gual to inform him that measures were secretly under way in England for the liberation of Spanish America:

“The generals who are to command the expedition have been to see me about the affair. Their intentions and ideas agree perfectly with ours and with those of the Spanish Americans who have been here. May Providence lend support to our undertaking in order that it may be executed with prudence and good faith by both parties. The result should promote the common welfare in an incalculable manner! Observe secrecy in this matter and maintain your honorable resolution to die for the liberty and independence of your country. May

¹⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 45.

an evil fate befall any American who thinks otherwise!"¹⁹

Yet Miranda's hopes fluctuated. In a disappointed spirit he soon sent word to Gual that the destination of the expedition intended for Spanish America had been changed and that no one actually knew whither it was bound.²⁰ On June 4 his mood had changed again; for, hinting that in a few days he might transmit important news, he addressed a letter to this friend and urged him to assemble all the sympathizers with the cause of Spanish-American independence who might be in Trinidad, Martinique, and Curaçao.²¹ However, the result proved that Miranda had been again deceived or else that he had deceived himself.

As a link in the international relations of Miranda there figured at this time a bizarre Frenchman called Louis Dupéron. In Paris they had reached an agreement that, if circumstances in England favored the liberation of the Spanish Indies, Dupéron was to follow Miranda. Under an assumed name the Frenchman deviously made his way to London in the midsummer of 1798. There he was employed as Miranda's scribe. In less than a year, however, the secretary had a difference with his master.

Like other disputes in which Miranda was at one time or another involved this one was largely due to his inability to meet pressing financial obligations. Dupéron maintained that after a service of eight months, he had received no salary. Consequently on January 30, 1799, he demanded that he be paid one hundred and twenty pounds to return a loan, to relieve the needs of his family, and to meet the expenses of his return to the Continent.²² After receiving a portion of his claim, Dupéron vanished. He had meantime transferred to an ex-inspector general of the secret police of Paris named Du Bois, alias D'Ossonville, copies of valuable manuscripts preserved in Miranda's papers. Du Bois soon attempted to sell

¹⁹ Mar. 4, 1800, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

²⁰ April 4, 1800, *ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Dupéron to Miranda, Jan. 30, 1799, Mir. MSS., vol. 24.

these papers to the Spanish Ambassador at Vienna.²³ After reaching France, however, Dupéron was incarcerated on suspicion of being implicated in a royalist conspiracy. Meantime the court of Madrid again warned officials in the Indies to beware of Miranda's iniquitous schemes.

At this epoch the plotter learned of a strange character who sometimes went under the name of "Rossi." This person had evidently tried to transmit to English ministers information about Spanish rule in South America. A fragment of a letter addressed by the "Jesuit Rossi to the English Government in 1797," which is preserved among Miranda's papers, mentioned the discontent prevailing in Peru. It suggested that all that was necessary to start an uprising against Spanish rule was something to rally around. Rossi declared that "all the rest of Spanish America" suffered the same wrongs as Peru and that its inhabitants were animated by the same spirit.

With this letter is found a note, which was perhaps written by Miranda, to the effect that the fragmentary letter was found among the manuscripts of "the ex-Jesuit Don Viscardo, a native of Arequipa in Peru."²⁴ Apparently this mysterious revolutionary had enjoyed a pension from the English Government to which he had presented plans for the liberation of the Spanish Indies. Whether or not Rossi was simply another name for Viscardo, it is clear that shortly after the latter's death in London in February, 1798, Miranda came into possession of his inedited papers. In January, 1799, the plotter wrote to Caro to state that he was engaged in revising what their "compatriot Viscardo had done."²⁵ On September 2, 1799, Miranda informed the Cuban that he was transmitting to him "a copy of the Letter of Viscardo."²⁶

This was the *Lettre aux Espagnols-Américains* of Juan

²³ Du Bois, "Causes secretes de la detention du Citoyen D'Ossoville," Sept. 17, 1801, A. N., F⁷, 6318 B; in part, in O'Kelly de Galway, *Les généraux de la révolution française*, pp. 113-16.

²⁴ "Papier trouvé parmi ceux des Jesuite Rossi adressé au gouvernement Anglais en 1797," Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

²⁵ Miranda to Caro, Jan. 16, 1799, *ibid.*, vol. 46. ²⁶ *Ibid.*

Pablo Viscardo y Guzmán, which, presumably at the instance of Miranda, was published at Philadelphia in 1799. One of the earliest and most ardent pleas for Spanish-American emancipation that found its way into print, Viscardo's *Lettre* was soon used as a vehicle of propaganda. In a letter to Gual on October 4, 1799, Miranda directed him to ask the governor of Trinidad for a copy of this pamphlet which he had sent out in order that it might be circulated in South America. "Ask him for it," said Miranda, "and you will see with what solid, august, and evident reasons our compatriot Viscardo victoriously supports the justice and beauty of our cause." Four months later Gual informed his master that he had read the tract with "holy enthusiasm."²⁷

Miranda certainly became acquainted with an aspiring South American youth who was in England. In a dinner invitation which was probably extended in 1798, John Turnbull expressed the hope that Miranda would bring with him "the young Gentleman from Chile" in order that he might converse with him and perhaps form some commercial connections.²⁸ Among the annotations inscribed on Miranda's copy of his remonstrance of March 19, 1799, to William Pitt is a note that reads as follows: "A young Peruvian who is actually in London would voluntarily undertake to transmit the decision that England might take on this important matter, if this decision were satisfactory or important for his compatriots." Adjoined to that commentary is Miranda's illuminating explanation: "Don Riquelme, a native of Santiago de Chile, offered to carry the decision to his compatriots; but, as I did not receive any favorable news, shortly afterwards he left London in order to return to his native land."²⁹

That Chilean was undoubtedly the youth who was then

²⁷ Aguilar, "Aportaciones á la biografía del precursor de la independencia sur-americana," in *Boletín del centro de estudios americanistas de Sevilla*, año V, no. 20, pp. 8-9. Viscardo's rare tract was reprinted in 1911 in Villanueva, *Historia y diplomacia: Napoleón y la independencia de América*, pp. 295-321.

²⁸ Undated, Mir. MSS., vol. 22.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 45. In the same tome is the following undated note addressed to Miranda:



*Bernardo O'Higgins as Supreme Director of Chile.
Reproduced by courtesy of the Chilean Legation at
Washington.*

known as Bernardo Riquelme. He was the natural son of an adventurous Irishman named Ambrosio O'Higgins who terminated as Viceroy of Peru a picturesque career in the Spanish service. In his reminiscences Bernardo O'Higgins stated that when he encountered Miranda in 1798, that general was engaged in instructing some Spanish-American youths how to enjoy "the sweet fruit of the tree of liberty." Bernardo further declared that he became Miranda's favorite disciple, that when he heard from his master's lips the vivid story of his revolutionary endeavors he viewed the narrator as another Washington, and that with tearful eyes he threw himself into the arms of this revolutionary Father and inquired if "the breaking of the first link of a chain in North America caused a new nation to appear," were there not much stronger motives for "the destruction of the rest of this chain" that fastened other sections of the New World to European sceptres. He asked to be allowed to kiss the hands of the personage who was destined by Providence "to break those fetters which so ominously burden our compatriots." He predicted that from their labors there might "be born republics that will some day become the example for nations of the Old World. Behold in me, Sir, the melancholy remains of my countryman Lautaro! In my breast burns the same spirit as that which liberated my native land Arauco from its oppressors!"⁸⁰

O'Higgins went on to declare that, embracing him tenderly, Miranda said:

"Yes, my son, Divine Providence desires to fulfill our

"Querido Paisano,
y S^{or}. mio,
en respuesta a la nota de Vmd. debo decir le que con mucho gusto me hallase con Vmd. a la hora citada.

su mas afec^{mo}.

Serv^{or}.

Q. S. M. B.

B. Riquelme.

York Street n^o. 38."

⁸⁰ O'Higgins, *Epistolario*, I, 29, note. There is a tradition that Miranda taught mathematics to O'Higgins—see Moses, *The Intellectual Background of the Revolution in South America*, p. 30; Vicuña Mackenna, *La corona del héroe*, pp. 238-39.

wishes for the liberty of our common country which is decreed in the book of destiny. Much secrecy, valor, and constancy are the aëgis that will guard you from the blows of tyrants.' Without loss of time Miranda initiated his disciple into the secrets of cabinets of America and Europe respecting Spanish-American affairs. A fine library was the place in which the master studied the policy of nations; he devoted most of his time to the art of war. During long winter nights he told his disciples anecdotes of the French Revolution. From time to time he made wise comments in order that they might remember the errors which stained with blood and smothered in its cradle the liberty that should have been extended to the whole world."⁸¹

Miranda's company was also sought by Pedro de Vargas. This character, who bore as an alias the name "Pedro Oribe," represented himself to have been one of the leaders in Nariño's abortive conspiracy. Fortunately he escaped from the toils of the Spanish Government, and finally made his way to England where he met Miranda in November, 1799.⁸² The latter became so much interested in the designs of the fugitive that he soon addressed to William Pitt a letter which inclosed a memorial from this "commissary." It would be difficult to say to what extent this petition merely reflected Miranda's views.

In his plea Vargas avowed that the evils of Spanish rule in northern South America had reached a climax. "The population of the country is large enough so that it can aspire to independence; today the Viceroyalty of New Granada is like an eldest son who must be emancipated." He argued that this liberation was earnestly desired by all classes. "Despoiled even of our homes, assassinated in them, or reduced to slavery for three consecutive centuries, what is more natural for us than to attempt to overthrow tyranny by force?" He thus described the purpose of his mission: "My associates ask from England aid in men, arms, and munitions, besides some warships to protect the contingents and to hinder or to intercept the re-

⁸¹ O'Higgins, I, 29-30, note. ⁸² *Diario*, Nov. 17, 1799, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

enforcements that Spain may send. They pledge themselves to negotiate an alliance with Great Britain and fully to reimburse her for all the expenses of the expedition.”³³

Between the years of 1798 and 1800 the lodgings of Miranda thus became known to discontented Spanish-Americans who had drifted to the English metropolis. Other compatriots than Caro, Vargas, and O’Higgins presumably consorted with the self-styled agent of the Spanish-American colonies whether his abode was in Queen Charlotte Road, or Great Pultney Street, or New Road. A Spanish minister aptly said that the famous rebel, General Miranda, was the focus of those persons who conspired against Spain.

An hypothesis which is not inconsistent with the rest of Miranda’s activity is that during this period he founded in London a society which developed into an influential international association of Spanish-American revolutionaries that became known as the *Logia Lautaro*. There is no doubt that this club later became active in South America where it mysteriously promoted the revolution directed by San Martín. But though works dealing with the Masonic Order were listed in a catalogue of Miranda’s library as early as 1783, and though he displayed an interest in Masonic establishments during his trip through Europe, yet an examination of his inedited papers reveals nothing to prove either that he belonged to the Masonic Order or that he was the founder of the Lautaro Lodge. Nor has evidence elsewhere been found to show that he ever initiated such revolutionists as San Martín and Bolívar into an association of South American Carbonari. In truth, there is no evidence to indicate that Miranda ever met San Martín.

The chief indication of Miranda’s possible connection with a revolutionary association, is found in the fragmentary reminiscences of Bernardo O’Higgins which we will therefore use again. Writing in the third person the Chilean averred that the continuance of hostilities between France and Eng-

³³ Nov. 20, 1799 (copy), inclosure in Miranda to Pitt, Nov. 25, 1799, *ibid*.

land "furnished a new theatre that stimulated the meditations of Miranda," who had awaited this war to initiate his operations. "O'Higgins left England for Spain with plans that had been framed in London with the South Americans, Bejarano, Caro, and others,—plans that upon the arrival of O'Higgins in Spain he presented to the Great American Reunion, reserving for its secret committee the most private measures which he could not reveal to the members of the Great Reunion. This society fixed its headquarters at the Columns of Hercules whence there sallied forth the emissaries who were to destroy the tyrant's throne in South America: O'Higgins for Chile and Lima, Bejarano for Guayaquil and Quito, Baquijano for Lima and Peru, as well as the canons Cortés and Fretes who were also bound for Chile."³⁴ There is a possibility that the historian of the future may by the aid of hidden South-American archives some day indisputably link such associated conspirators to the monster web that Miranda was spinning in London.

The Chilean historian Vicuña Mackenna printed "the advice given by an old South American to a young compatriot upon his return from England to his native land." In this breviary Miranda gave his favorite disciple the sage counsel of one who had long been tossed on the stormy billows of the world:

"Upon leaving England, you should not forget for a single instant that outside of this country there is in all the world only one other nation in which you can discuss politics outside of the tried heart of a friend. That country is the United States. Choose therefore a friend, but choose him with the greatest care; for if you blunder you are lost. Upon different

³⁴ O'Higgins, I, 30, note. The view that Miranda was the founder of a Spanish-American revolutionary club is taken by Mitre, *Historia de San Martín*, I, 135-36; Mitre, *Historia de Belgrano*, I, 113, II, 272-73; Vicuña Mackenna, *Vida de O'Higgins*, p. 62; Mancini, *Bolívar et l'émancipation des colonies espagnoles*, pp. 272-75; Hemenway, "The Relationship of Masonry to the Liberation of Spanish America," in the *Builder*, I, 259-64; Alemán, "Aus der Vorgeschichte der Mai-Revolution," in *Die Kette*, IV, no. 13, pp. 17-24; Zúñiga, *La logia "lautaro" y la independencia de América*, pp. 33, 37-38, 40.

occasions I have suggested to you the names of various South Americans in whom you can repose confidence, if you meet them in your journey, which I doubt, for they live in a different zone. * * *

“Because of the events of Chilean history I would expect much of your countrymen, particularly in the South, where, unless I am mistaken, you intend to reside. Their wars with their neighbors should have made them skillful in the use of arms, while the proximity of a free people should have made them understand the idea of liberty and independence. * * *

Youth is the age of ardent and generous sentiments. Among the young men of your own age you will encounter many who are ready to listen to you and who are easily convinced. But, on the other hand, youth is also the age of indiscretion and of temerical acts; therefore you should be beware of those defects of the young men as well as of the timidity and the prejudices of the old.

“It is also an error to believe that a man who wears a tonsure or who reposes in the easy seat of a canon is an intolerant fanatic and a decided enemy of the rights of man. I know from experience that in this class there are found the most illustrious and liberal of South Americans but the difficulty is to discover them.

“The pride and fanaticism of the Spaniards are insuperable. They will despise you because you were born in America and abhor you because you were educated in England. You should accordingly always avoid them.

“The Spanish Americans, impatient and communicative, will demand of you with avidity the story of your travels and adventures, and from the nature of their questions you can form a rule by which you can determine the character of those persons who interpellate you. Making proper allowance for their profound ignorance, you should estimate their character by the degree of attention which they give you and by the greater or less intelligence which they display in comprehending you. According to this test your confidence should be granted or withheld.

“Never allow disgust or desperation to gain control of your mind; for if you once entertain those sentiments, you will render yourself incapable of serving your country. * * * Love

your country! Nourish that sentiment constantly, fortify it by every possible means; for only by its duration and its energy can you accomplish good. The obstacles in the way of serving your country are so numerous, so formidable, and so invincible, I shall venture to say, that only the most ardent love for it can sustain you in your efforts for its future happiness.”⁸⁵

Let us next consider General Miranda's finances. As he was not fully remunerated for his military services in France, and as he had to find some means of subsistence, his activities in England in 1798 and 1799 again raise the question respecting his financial relations with that government. At this juncture John Turnbull not only advanced money to him but also acted as his fiscal intermediary with English ministers. A letter of Turnbull dated February 18, 1799, which was addressed to Under Secretary George Hammond, explained the situation thus:

“I had the Honour some time since to inform you and to request that you would communicate the same to Lord Grenville, that from having conceived that M. de Miranda's Services might have been rendered useful to this Country, I had desired my House in Trade of Turnbull, Forbes, and Co. to supply him with what money he had Occasion for his Subsistence, since his arrival in England—He has now been in London upwards of twelve Months and altho he has certainly lived during that time with every degree of Prudence and Economy, yet our Advances for him and different persons whom he has brought to England, and sent from England, in order to coöperate with him, have become considerable. I am unwilling to intrude for a moment on Mr. Pitt, and we have no Objection to support the Advance, and continue our Assistance, provided that there is any prospect of our being ever reimbursed, either by Genl. Miranda, or otherwise. For our satisfaction in this respect, I beg leave to entreat, that after submitting this matter at a leisure moment to Lord Grenville, you

⁸⁵ Vicuña Mackenna, *La corona del héroe*, pp. 240-43

will do me the Honour to favour me with your Sentiments.”³⁶

A curt reply from Downing Street furnished little consolation to either Miranda or Turnbull. “Having submitted your letter of yesterday’s date to Lord Grenville,” said Hammond, “I have been directed by His Lordship to inform you that he cannot hold out the smallest expectation that His Majesty’s government will defray M. de Miranda’s expences in this country.”³⁷ A letter from Turnbull to Miranda dated May 11, 1799, thus analyses his financial prospects at that time:

“Inclosed is a sketch of your Acct., which amounts to £1720—as it was made out. I thought it as well to send it you that you might look it over at your leisure but you may be well assured, that we are far from intending to put you to any Sort of Inconvenience, by not continuing to assist you, as far as we really consistently can, or I am persuaded, my good sir, that you yourself would desire—The farther advance to Combray, who as well as Dupéron has pestered me with long Letters, yesterday, that I have not taken the trouble to read, will amount to about £50. wh. will make the whole of your advance be £1770 and altho money is at present very valuable we will with pleasure endeavor farther to assist you in order to enable you to get from England, and give you some chance at Trinidad, with a Sum wch. will make the whole of our Advance amount to £2,000, comprehending the Interest and advances to be still made to Mr. Caro and you must really not look to us for any more on any Consideration whatever—At same time I am sensible, that you will stand much in need of Credit at Trinidad and I therefore very much wish that you would use every means to prevail on Mr. King and Count Woronzow to give you a conditional Credit for £500 cash to be drawn on their agents in London, provided you should have occasion for it—I cannot think that they would refuse you so small a favor, especially when you show them what a large sum merely from Friendship we have advanced—Mr. King leaves Town on Monday for Bath, and that occasions me to write you.”³⁸

³⁶ Copy, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

³⁷ Hammond to Turnbull, Feb. 19, 1799, *ibid*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 22.

Yet, in September, 1799, Miranda temporarily relinquished his plan to go to the New World. Through Turnbull he was given a message from Under Secretary of State King to the effect that the English ministers had decided that for the present he should not leave England, and that they wished him to have "a sufficient allowance" so that he might live in an easy and comfortable manner during the period which it might be judged expedient for him to stay there.³⁹ Turnbull further informed him that the government entertained a high opinion of him "as Mr. Pitt's man," and that in the near future his hopes would be realized and his fine plans carried out. However, when the ministers gave him a stipend of three hundred pounds a year, without any reimbursement for his expenses, he complained that this was "capricious conduct."⁴⁰ On September 30 he addressed a letter to Under Secretary King hinting that he was dissatisfied at the financial remuneration which he had been allowed. As indicative of his sentiments he quoted his letter to Pitt of January 28, 1791, and declared that upon this basis he had authorized Turnbull to receive on his account "any money that His Majesty's ministers may be willing to advance to me:—and it being always understood by me, that my detention in England is with the view on the part of its government of fulfilling, at a convenient opportunity, its promises towards South America."⁴¹

Perhaps Miranda's ardently expressed desire to proceed to that Continent had some relation to the modest size of his stipend. On December 2, 1799, he addressed a letter to the Duke of Portland, who was secretary of state for home affairs, about his desire to leave England for America. He requested to be informed who was the proper person to ask for information "upon this distressing business" and complained that he had been detained in England for two years.⁴² The South American was evidently in sore financial straits, for he had to borrow small sums from his friends. Among the kind letters

³⁹ Endorsed, "Sept. the 18th. 1799," Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

⁴⁰ "Conferencia," *ibid.* ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 45. ⁴² *Ibid.*, vol. 46.

that he received from his old friend General Melville was one dated December 17, 1799, in which that gentleman stated that at many periods "he would have been happy to have accommodated Genl. Miranda with a loan of a sum ten times greater than the one in question, and to have waited his convenience for the repayment," but that as his private fortune was at present "barely adequate to his unavoidable expenses" he was under "the disagreeable necessity" of asking him to repay the small sum which he had borrowed.⁴³ The financial condition of Miranda is mirrored in the following letter to him from John Turnbull dated February 5, 1800:

"Inclosed you have a Copy of Your Account, by which you will find that since the 1st of May we have paid you £306—on account of which, we have only received £200 from Government. *Before that day* our advance amounted to £1942. Really, My Dear Sir, it is impossible to go on at this Rate—the Simple Interest of our advance amounts to £100 pr. ann. Mr. Forbes, I assure you, is equally disposed as I am, to assist and to serve you,—but a Line must, for your Satisfaction as well as ours, be drawn. We were in hopes, that £2000 would have been the utmost possible amount of our advance—we will now extend it to 2000 Guineas or £2100—to the 1st of last Month, which will enable you to get free of Mr. Caro, and pay off your little debts; but from the 1st of last month, we shall pay you the £25 regularly, and *cannot possibly go beyond it*. On this Principle, as you will see by the Statement inclosed, you will have still to dispose of for yourself and M. Caro £76-17-3, and to receive in the beginning of next Month £25—say March—and every other Month, so long as we receive the allowance from Govt. You must sincerely regulate your Matters accordingly, as we cannot go farther, and it is extremely distressing to us, to have paid away so much money, especially in the present times without a Prospect of recovering it. The allowance, I cannot doubt, will with good management, be amply sufficient to enable you to live comfortably."⁴⁴

Meantime Miranda had rented lodgings in New Road,

⁴³ *Ibid.*, vol. 22.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

where he sought relief from tribulation in his beloved books. As early as December, 1799, he employed a servant to look after his household; for in his diary he mentioned a maid named "Sally."⁴⁵ He renewed relations with his old crony, Thomas Pownall, with whom he again discussed his projects. Of the ex-governor Miranda wrote in an undated memorandum: "I have passed some pleasant hours in the society of this good friend whose taste for letters and love for liberty unite us more and more."⁴⁶ At Pownall's residence in Knightsbridge the two enthusiasts subscribed to a new scheme for the revolutionizing of northern South America by native insurgents who were to be aided by the English garrison from Trinidad. A unique feature, which was probably suggested by Pownall, was the provision that when Cartagena was captured it might be placed in the hands of the English as security for the fulfillment of commercial or political pledges.⁴⁷ This occasion seems to have been one in which Miranda contemplated a transfer of territory in South America to England.

In the end of 1799 his perennial hopes blossomed again. In a diarial note dated December 15 he wrote that he had been visited by a relative of one of his American friends, Captain Rutherford of the Royal Engineers, who desired to gather information about the condition of South America. Miranda furnished Rutherford with a list of books and maps for study. He soon divined that the captain was forming a project for military operations against the Spanish Indies. Upon learning that, with the approval of English ministers, Rutherford was sending this data to Sir Ralph Abercromby, the conqueror of Trinidad, who was then in Scotland with Secretary Dundas, Miranda recorded that this was being done "for the independence and liberty of Spanish America, without which it would be infamy for me to acquiesce." In a continuation of this note dated February 10, 1800, Miranda wrote of Rutherford:

⁴⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Jan. 8, 1800, *ibid.*

"In truth he came to see me at 11:30 P. M., offered me his hand in friendly fashion, proposed a conference, and assured me that his object was the absolute independence of the colonies. This plan would allow their inhabitants the liberty to select the form of government that they might judge most convenient without any concession of commercial monopoly or anything else that would shock my liberal and patriotic sentiments. On this supposition I showed him on the map what in my judgment would be the military operations that a body of four thousand regular troops, accompanied by four or six warships, might undertake against the province of Caracas. To this scheme he perfectly assented, saying, 'I see now that there is not the slightest difficulty.' Then we considered New Granada where we saw the fortress of Cartagena that appeared to him an insurmountable obstacle. Yet when I indicated the defects of its fortifications, and above all a point that was extremely weak, which I did not show him until he had given me his word of honor sacredly to keep the information to himself, he agreed 'that the force would be sufficient and that the obstacles would be much less than he had at first imagined.' He then said to me 'that we should not use less than nine thousand soldiers and ships in proportion.' " ⁴⁸

It was evidently from letters sent him by Miranda that Gual gained the impression that the chief promoter expected to proceed to Jamaica whence an English force of some twelve thousand men would be sent against Venezuela and New Granada.⁴⁹ In response to an inquiry of Rutherford, who evidently did not fancy a war of castes similar to that which had broken out in Santo Domingo, Miranda affirmed that the great majority of the people in northern South America were "Indians and whites, with pure customs and in that stage of civilization which would have suited Plato for the establishment of his republic."⁵⁰ The Spanish Government meantime got wind of the interest that Englishmen were taking in the schemes of

⁴⁸ Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

⁴⁹ Aguilar, "Aportaciones á la biografía del precursor de la independencia sur-americana," *loc. cit.*, año V, no. 20, p. 15, note 1.

⁵⁰ *Diario*, Feb. 10, 1800, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

Miranda, Caro, Vargas, and Gual; it sent a warning to the Captain General of Cuba to the effect that the chief intriguer was destined to lead a military expedition from Trinidad against Puerto Cabello.⁵¹

Yet, perhaps because of the sudden departure from London of General Abercromby, who was sent to Egypt where he met an heroic death at Alexandria, the promoter was compelled to relinquish hope of immediate action. In a diarial entry concerning the abrupt termination of the conferences in conjunction with one and another "shameful contradiction" on the part of English ministers, Miranda commented that "an interpreter was not necessary for an understanding of the text."⁵² On March 18, 1800, Pownall, who had vainly attempted to lay his views before the Prime Minister, wrote to Pitt announcing that he had reluctantly retired from the transaction, and that his Spanish-American acquaintances had withdrawn their propositions.⁵³ In a letter addressed to Rutherford, Miranda regretted that "the most favorable opportunity" had been allowed to slip away. He expressed his hope that Abercromby and Rutherford would never make use of the information which he had furnished except to promote "the absolute *Liberty* and *Independency* of the Hispano-american Colonies."⁵⁴

Meantime progress had been made in the contraband case in which Miranda had been involved. After General Cagigal had proceeded from Cuba to Spain, being unwilling to divulge the whereabouts of his favorite aide, he was ignominiously thrust into a castle at Cadiz.⁵⁵ As the result of a petition to Charles III recounting his long and faithful service, a royal order was issued that his case should be heard by the Council of the Indies which acted as the supreme court for Spanish America.⁵⁶ An American acquaintance who saw Cagigal in a miserable plight at Cadiz warned Miranda that the

⁵¹ Orguiso to the Captain General of Cuba, July 3, 1800, Cub. MSS.

⁵² *Diario*, Feb. 12, 1800, Mir. MSS., vol. 46. ⁵³ Copy, *ibid.* ⁵⁴ May 6, 1800, *ibid.*

⁵⁵ O'Reilly to José de Gálvez, Sept. 16, 1783, A. G. I., audiencia de Santo Domingo, 84-2-9. ⁵⁶ Cagigal to Charles III, Aug. 22, 1783, *ibid.*

only condition on which the prisoner could expect justice was to deliver his protégé to Spain.⁵⁷

On December 10, 1799, Cagigal wrote that the suit had at last been decided in their favor. He transmitted an extract from the judgment of the Council of the Indies which stated that Colonel Miranda was "a faithful subject" of His Catholic Majesty and "deserving of his royal favor."⁵⁸ He invited Miranda to proceed to Spain in order that they might jointly enter a claim for damages at Madrid.⁵⁹ With due prudence, however, the creole declined to risk crossing the Spanish frontier. He wrote to his old commander to declare that in Spain the situation of an honest man would always be very precarious and that a bad man ordinarily enjoyed with impunity the fruit of his crimes.⁶⁰ The conspirator's commentary on that correspondence preserved in his papers furnishes his interpretation of this incident: "New attempt of the Court of Madrid to deceive Miranda by using as an instrument of its perfidy his esteemed friend Don Juan Manuel de Cagigal."⁶¹

In the summer of 1800 Miranda again tried to leave England in spite of the Alien Act that placed restrictions on the movements of foreigners. In a memorandum concerning his application for a passport he mentioned certain motives that animated him. He declared that, having withdrawn the terms on which he had solicited English assistance in his designs, he had "no further Business in England." In a diplomatic fashion he asserted that, as his conduct while in the Spanish service had been justified because it was directed against "an ungrounded and false accusation under which he had suffered persecution for nineteen years from the court of Madrid," and as his property rights had been restored, it was necessary for him to return to his own country. He expressed gratitude for the protection which England had afforded him, but maintained that he was entitled to a passport on the following

⁵⁷ Sayre to Miranda, May 15, 1788, Mir. MSS., vol. 23.

⁵⁸ Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, p. 257.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 256. ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 260. ⁶¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

grounds: that he was not a prisoner of war, that he had come to England under a safe conduct, and that he was not accused of having performed any acts against the English Government.⁶²

On July 18, 1800, Miranda wrote to Gual in words that were more indignant than truthful. The treatment that he was receiving at the hands of ministers, who declined to allow him to leave England for the West Indies, had provoked his intense disgust. He expressed the opinion that the tyranny of the French Directory had completely ended and that the Revolution had now returned to its original principles. "In this country," he continued, "every promise that has been made to us has been broken; I see nothing but perfidy and bad faith." He declared that all the Spanish Americans who were in London had gone to Paris. "I have demanded with vigor my passport to leave the country and perfidiously they detain me." After this intimation that he was contemplating a return to France, he added that he had not received a single letter from his compatriot. Rightly did he divine that his correspondence was being intercepted by English officials. "If by any chance you write to me," he concluded, "let it be under cover to *Mr. King*, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America."⁶³

A letter from the Secretary of State for War dated three days later presents the English official view regarding Miranda's detention:⁶⁴

"I have received from Mr. Pownall a letter by the tenor of which I understand that the object of the interview you have desired with me is to apply for a passport to quit this Country, on permission to go thro' Trinidad to the Caraccas.

"It would be superfluous for me to give you the trouble of calling upon me, because the question of your residence in this Country is in no respect cognizable by the department of Government over which I preside. But in the event of your re-

⁶² "Case of General Miranda on which he claims his Passport," *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 46. In a letter of June 15, 1800 (copy), to Dundas, Pownall used similar arguments, *ibid.* ⁶³ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 344. ⁶⁴ *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 46.

ceiving permission to leave England, I am firmly persuaded that your repairing to Trinidad would unquestionably afford occasion to various speculations and observations which ought by no means to be encouraged, and I am therefore concerned to be under the necessity of intimating to you that such a request could not be acceded to."

The correspondence cited in this chapter shows that in 1798 and 1799 Miranda was in much closer contact with his compatriots than has been hitherto supposed. Although the information transmitted to him from his correspondents may occasionally have been misleading, yet he was kept in touch with revolutionary sentiment in northern South America. Among the important results of Miranda's residence in London were the significant affiliations that he formed with those Spanish Americans who made his residence a rendezvous. Though the English Government neither executed his plans nor permitted him to proceed to the West Indies for the purpose of executing them himself, yet it liquidated some of his expenditures. Though the ministers did not grant him a regular pension, yet through the firm of Turnbull and Forbes they advanced him money enough to pay his expenses and to insure him a comfortable living in London. After so many rebuffs, this financial assurance must have served Miranda as a solace.

Chapter X

MIRANDA'S LAST VISIT TO FRANCE

AN INTERLUDE between the consideration of his plans by Pitt and by Addington was employed by Miranda in a trip to the Continent. Utterly disgusted at the failure of his negotiations with the Pitt ministry, he had for some time dreamed of making another visit to France. There the Directory had been swept away by a coup d'état and a consular government established. In January, 1800, the émigré had addressed a letter to Napoleon, who had been made First Consul. He declared that he was a French citizen as well as one of the oldest soldiers of the Republic, and claimed the rights which he alleged had been violated in September, 1797. He complained that, after his acquittal on the charge of treason, he had been persecuted in Paris, that his library had been pillaged, and that his salary as a French general had been left unpaid. Then he presented this plea :

“Now that the august reign of justice and moderation has been loftily proclaimed under happy auspices, I hope to obtain by your supreme authority that justification which so many other persons in a similar position have very properly received. I hope that my formal stipulation with France will be at last fulfilled. The love of liberty for which I have made sacrifice upon sacrifice caused me to renounce a home in my native land, which is perhaps the most oppressed country in the world. This love was the cause of my intimate liaison with France. Before the outbreak of the French Revolution the same motive had caused me to seek a refuge in England. It was because of this old connection that she furnished me with an asylum when the rulers of France drove me from her breast in September, 1797. For more than a year I have eagerly solicited permission to leave England in order to proceed to the United States but have not been able to obtain it! That failure, Citizen Consul, explains why this letter is not addressed to you from a neutral country. May the blessings of liberty become known to those of our fellow beings who de-

sire them, and may France after so many sacrifices become a stable and glorious nation founded upon the inestimable gift of a wise and perfect liberty,—these are, and always will be, my most sincere wishes!"¹

This appeal was apparently forwarded to the First Consul through Vargas who left England for France in February, 1800. In a letter which he meantime addressed to the Prime Minister, Miranda analyzed the international situation. He declared that the imminent problem was whether England or France should be the power to have intimate relations with the Spanish Indies. He argued that the European state which aided a revolution in that vast domain would gain access to its commerce and sources of revenue and that this nation would also be able to form an alliance with the United States.²

Pownall became aware of Miranda's desire to leave England, and on May 1 he sent a note to Dundas to ask that his friend should be given a passport. Shortly afterwards the ex-governor not only sent Miranda some projects of political organization which he had framed for the emancipated Spanish Americans but also an offer of his services to the revolutionary cause in Spanish America.³ On July 15 he repeated this request and further asked that the Venezuelan should be allowed to proceed to Trinidad and thence to his native land. Pownall argued that as Miranda arrived in England before the passage of the last Alien Act and had resided there under a safe-conduct for two years, that as he had done nothing contrary to the rights, laws, or interests of England, he could not be considered as a prisoner of state, and hence by the law of nations he had a right to claim a passport in order to leave the country.⁴

In a "Pro-Memoria," an unrevised paper that Pownall sent his friend about this time, he offered some shrewd suggestions in regard to the Spanish-American people. He advised Mi-

¹ 10 Pluioise, an 8, Mir. MSS., vol. 46. ² Feb. 11, 1800, *ibid.*

³ May 25 and June 13, 1800, *ibid.*

⁴ Pownall to Dundas, June 15, 1800 (copy), *ibid.*

randa that when he should providentially return to his native land, he should not be shocked or disgusted upon finding that his compatriots could with difficulty be taught what were their interests. If they prove suspicious and ungrateful, he proceeded,—unwittingly assuming the rôle of a prophet,—“overcome this evil by good,” that is, by making them realize their true interests. He warned the revolutionary not to allow his political views to be warped either by parties or factions but to act with the welfare of the whole people in mind. “Expect to meet with opposition, but parry it as long as it can be parried: where and when it can not, promptly and decidedly bear it down; yet try all other means first. * * * Permit me lastly to recommend to you not merely to read, but to study, with a practical view to Example, the History of Moses, as of the Greatest Statesman and purest Patriot, which History notices.”⁵

In a letter addressed to Napoleon on July 8, 1800, Miranda repeated his complaint about the refusal of English ministers “under all sorts of pretexts” to give him a passport. “After this sort of treatment,” said Miranda in a petulant tone, “one is tempted to believe that this government is engaged in dishonoring those persons whom it cannot corrupt.”⁶ Another indication of his feelings is found in a letter in English which on July 24, 1800, he sent to William Pitt. To cite a significant passage: “I have had the honour of applying to you repeatedly for a proper Permission to quit England, having lost all hope of being of use to my native Land; which motive alone induced me to come into this Country. And as I understand now, you desire to know where I intended to go to—I may assure you that my wishes are to go thro’ France and Spaine to Caracas—having reason to beleave that at this present moment I may perhaps obtain permission from the Court of Madrid, for to go and see my Family and to obtain possession also of my Patrimonial State of which I have been deprived for this many years past.”⁷ Evidently the request

⁵ May 9, 1800, Mir. MSS., vol. 46.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Mel. MSS., f. 33.

was not granted, for a month later Miranda secured a passport requesting all persons whom it might concern to allow him to pass freely "without any molestation or hindrance."⁸ In his papers are found hints that he hoped to be indemnified by the French Government and also that he desired to interest the First Consul in the fortunes of the Spanish Indies.

In October he reached The Hague. There he presented himself to the French envoy who decided to allow him to proceed to Antwerp.⁹ An anonymous character meantime wrote to him from Paris to transmit the sentiments of friends. This person expressed the view that Miranda might not advance the cause of Spanish-American independence by a trip to the French capital. Yet he declared that if the promoter felt that he would not thus simply change one prison for another, his friends could get permission for him to make the visit. "In my judgment," said the mysterious counsellor, who was perhaps a South American, "this is the time to finish the volume on Europe and to begin the volume on America."¹⁰

From Antwerp, the scene of his triumph in 1792, Miranda sent a letter to Fouché, the all-powerful French minister of police, on November 2, 1800, to state that he was awaiting a response from Napoleon to a claim which he had presented through Senator Lanjuinais, and to ask that he should be treated with the consideration deserved by one who had been beggared and exiled from France.¹¹ Through his correspondent, Madame Pétion, he received notice that, at the instance of his friend Lanjuinais, the First Consul had accorded him tacit permission to live in retirement at Paris in order to arrange his affairs.¹² Meantime Miranda gained the confidence of the French prefect at Antwerp who eventually granted him a passport as "a citizen of America."¹³

Thus he was allowed to cross the French frontier. On No-

⁸ Signed by Rufus King, Sept. 29, 1800, A. N., F⁷, 6285, no. 5819.

⁹ Semonville to Herbonville, Oct. 25, 1800, *ibid.*

¹⁰ Mancini, *Bolivar et l'émancipation des colonies espagnoles*, pp. 193-95.

¹¹ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 348.

¹² 29 Brumaire, an 9, A. N., police générale, F⁷, 6285, no. 5919.

¹³ Passport signed by C. Herbonville, 3 Frimaire, an 9, Mir. MSS., vol. 45.

vember 30, 1800, he addressed the Minister of Police and declared that he understood he had Napoleon's tacit permission to visit Paris. He expressed his intention to act circumspectly and to proceed to the United States when his claim was adjusted.¹⁴ In his journal Vargas wrote that after arriving in the capital Miranda occupied himself almost exclusively with "the liberal arts, thinking little or nothing about politics, and awaiting a favorable moment in which to present a demand for the wages that France owed him."¹⁵

The ex-general was not allowed much time, however, to demand the payment of his salary; for on December 1 Fouché issued an order that Miranda should be placed under arrest, and that all his papers should be seized. As the prefect of police soon reported to Fouché that the suspect was not to be found in his reputed lodgings at 1497 Rue St. Honoré, it is evident that he was not detained at once.¹⁶ Eventually, however, Miranda was arrested and cast into the Temple. His papers were sealed in a large morocco portfolio. The suspicions of the Parisian police were not diminished when they found in his belongings some engravings of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, a curious Latin document to which an imperial seal was attached by black and yellow cords, and an enigmatic note from a man named Smith who on behalf of a little committee of "philosophers" had invited Miranda to expound to them his views about "the arts" which they loved as well as he.¹⁷

Pierre Fardel, judge of the division of Halle-aux-blés of Paris, soon examined the prisoner who was accused "of espionage and of corresponding with enemies of the State." On March 4, 1801, in response to an inquiry about his profession, Miranda stated that he was "a general in the service of the French Republic." When asked what he had been doing in England since his proscription, he replied that he had been

¹⁴ O'Kelly de Galway, *Les généraux de la révolution*, pp. 91-92.

¹⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

¹⁶ Dunnoie to Fouché, 12 Frimaire, an 9, A. N., F⁷, 6285, no. 5819.

¹⁷ "30 Pluaise, an 9," *ibid.*



R. B. 1793

MIRANDA

General of the Armies of the Republic

Miranda as a General of the French Republic. Engraving by François Bonneville. In the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

expecting that the oppressive measure which France had adopted in regard to himself would cease. The Latin document that had been found among his belongings, he explained, was a manuscript of the bishop of Liège which came into his possession when he occupied that city as a commander of the French army. The engravings of the King and Queen of France, he declared, belonged to his servant. In his own defense the accused alleged that he had dismissed Dupéron on becoming aware that he was in league with Pichegru and wished "to reëstablish the old régime in France."¹⁸

On March 5, 1801, Miranda was taken from the historic prison and subjected to further examination. During an inquiry concerning certain friends, he was questioned particularly about Dumouriez as well as about Mesdames Custine and Pétion. To a query about his negotiations with English ministers, he tactfully replied: "The motive of my relations with the cabinet of London was the liberty and independence of South America,—like that which France and Spain guaranteed to the United States,—without any monopoly of commerce or any territorial possessions by the English upon that Continent."¹⁹ When asked whom he proposed to use in the execution of his plans, he responded: "I wished to carry them out myself with the aid of two ex-Jesuits of Peru and three agents of the Spanish-American colonies who were in London." In answer to a question about England's motive for not executing his projects the prisoner diplomatically said: "The cabinet of London and especially the King are so set against any idea of liberty and independence that they prefer to sacrifice their own interests in order to gratify their hatred against the principles of liberty which are established in France, especially since they have seen that the Austrian and Russian armies are beginning to win victories in Italy against the soldiers of the Republic."²⁰

French police papers throw light upon the treatment to which the émigré was subjected. When his arrival in Holland

¹⁸ O'Kelly de Galway, pp. 96-98.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

became known in Paris, the police prepared a report about him. This précis declared that Miranda "had been employed by the English cabinet to which he had given all the information and advice" that he supposed would be most prejudicial to France. Further, his conduct upon two occasions left little doubt that he had become a traitor to the French Republic. Certain persons had expressed the calumnious opinion that even before leaving Paris the suspect was in the pay of England.²¹ A note scrawled on the margin of an order for the deportation of the ex-general succinctly declared that he was suspected of "manœuvres or intrigues contrary to the interests of the French Government and its Allies."²²

Miranda interpretatively linked this romantic episode with Spanish intrigues against his person. Read what he inscribed in a diarial note dated Paris, March 10, 1801: "Infernal machinations of the court of Madrid: (1) that I should not be received in France when I returned from my proscription; (2) that the infamous Fouché should accuse me of correspondence with enemies of State, upon this pretext get possession of my papers, and cast me into the Temple.—Miraculously I emerged from that prison after being detained six days, because of the vigorous exertions made by my friends, especially by Lanjuinais."²³ A note written by the émigré on the margin of Vargas' diary furnishes a more pointed interpretation: "The motive alleged was that I had become a spy of England."²⁴

Miranda was thus forced to leave Paris without urging his claim upon the First Consul or unfolding his projects about the emancipation of the Spanish Indies. In accordance with an order of Fouché, on March 14, 1801, the prefect of police liberated Miranda from his dungeon and directed him to leave

²¹ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 349, note d. The financial accounts of the English Government do not reveal that money was paid Miranda for secret service on the Continent, A. O., series 3, vol. 949. On this matter nothing was found in the Mir. MSS. ²² 15 Ventôse, an 9, A. N., F⁷, 6285, no. 5819.

²³ Mir. MSS., vol. 45. ²⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 47.

France within four days.²⁵ He now relinquished hope of Napoleon's aid.

Yet he still felt that the French Government had a keen interest in the Spanish Indies. After the publicist Abbé de Pradt had completed a volume on the emancipation of the Spanish colonies, Miranda wrote to continental friends to make solicitous inquiries about its reception. In a letter to the French statesman Boissy d'Anglas he inquired: "What does Spain say about De Pradt's plan? What do people think that the French Government anticipates in regard to this absolute independence?"²⁶ An extensive correspondence proves that he did not forget his friends in Paris. The best exposé of the effect of Miranda's experiences in France upon his political ideas is found in a letter addressed to an unknown correspondent in which he avowed that the French Revolution had not diminished his love for liberty a single particle. "When I speak of liberty," said he, "it is not the species of liberty that Robespierre, Sieyès, and Fouché have pretended to establish but the type of liberty which Montesquieu and Locke have very clearly explained. When I mention justice, I do not mean the kind of justice that Danton and Merlin gave us in France."²⁷

Upon being released, the émigré was furnished with a passport dated Paris, March 14, 1801, which stated that he was a native of Caracas who was going to the Batavian Republic.²⁸ According to the diary of Vargas, who accompanied Miranda on his return journey, on March 22 they left Paris and proceeded by way of Antwerp and Rotterdam to The Hague. It appears that they obtained permission to leave this capital only through the intercession of the Prussian Minister. Then they took passage on an American vessel bound for England.²⁹ On April 21 Miranda addressed letters to Turnbull from Gravesend. In an epistle marked "secret" the South American informed his friend that he had just reached this

²⁵ Dunnoie to Fouché, 24 Ventôse, an 9, A. N., F7, 6285, no. 5189.

²⁶ Dec. 15, 1801, Mir. MSS., vol. 47. ²⁷ June 8, 1801, *ibid.*

²⁸ Passport signed by Püs, *ibid.*, vol. 45. ²⁹ Vargas' Journal, *ibid.*, vol. 47.

port after being exposed to great personal danger from the governments of France and Spain. Avowing that he wished to make a "last effort" to save his country by English aid, he asked Turnbull to help him to get permission again to sojourn in London.³⁰ In a note addressed to Pitt, which was marked "private," Miranda outlined his program in these words:

"The causes for my arrival in this country are the imminent dangers which at this moment menace the Spanish-American Continent and the expeditions already prepared or being prepared in ports of the French Republic to invade the Spanish Indies. These oblige me to demand permission from you to make a brief sojourn incognito in England in order that I may embark on a neutral vessel for the coast of Venezuela or for the United States. News which I have recently received informs me that many of the Spanish-American colonies are upon the point of an almost general insurrection. If unfortunately the existing government of France should interfere, that intervention will throw those colonies into a condition of complete disorganization or will precipitate disasters similar to those which took place in Santo Domingo, unless wise, prompt, and vigorous measures are taken in advance. I ask that, in view of a measure so important and useful to the common welfare of Spanish America and England, you will be so good as to grant me without delay the permit which I have the honor to ask for myself and for one of my compatriots. He accompanies me under the name of Smith while I pass under the name of Martin in order to preserve the strictest incognito for the promotion of this affair."³¹

³⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 47. ³¹ April 21, 1801, *ibid.*

Chapter XI

FORMULATION OF PLANS FOR THE ADDINGTON MINISTRY

ON APRIL 23, 1801, Mr. Flint of the English Alien Office, wrote to Under Secretary Hammond to ask whether Miranda should be given a permit to proceed to London. Not without success did Turnbull urge Addington to grant the émigré a passport. Hence Miranda soon prepared to assume his former rôle. However he could no longer calculate upon the sympathetic interest of the great Prime Minister; for, because of the King's stubborn opposition to Catholic emancipation in Ireland, William Pitt had retired from office. On March 14, 1801, Henry Addington, one of Pitt's friends who had been speaker of the House of Commons for more than a decade, had become chancellor of the exchequer and prime minister. A vain man with moderate ability, Addington induced certain of Pitt's advisers to remain with him. Yet in men of recognized talent his cabinet was weak as compared with that of his predecessor.

Among the new ministers was Earl St. Vincent who became first lord of the admiralty. Miranda did not long delay in making approaches to the Addington ministry. In his diary he wrote on April 28 that he had informed Turnbull about designs which he had reason to believe that France entertained against Portugal, Brazil, and the Spanish Indies. With this news, said Miranda, his friend went to the Admiralty to talk with Lord St. Vincent. Turnbull also paid a visit to the Treasury to converse about English foreign policy with Nicholas Vansittart, now a member of Parliament and follower of Addington, who, upon returning from a mission to Copenhagen, had been made joint secretary of the treasury.¹ Vansittart soon wrote to the merchant to ask that instead of repairing to Downing Street the promoter should meet him secretly at

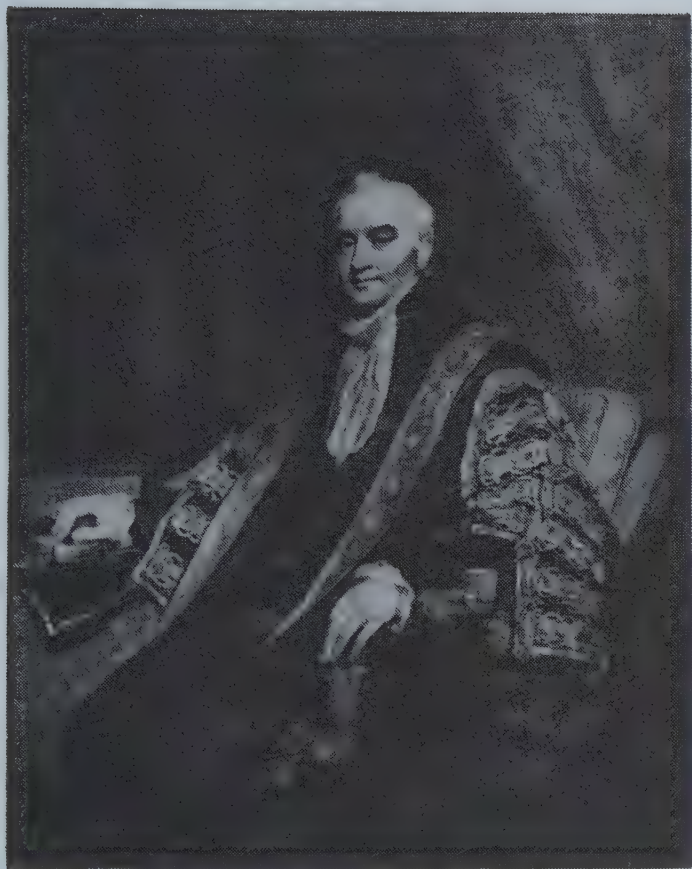
¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

his rooms in the Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, as the Prime Minister was of opinion that in this manner secrecy would be much better preserved. "You will please to represent me," added the Secretary, "as honored with Mr. Addington's entire confidence." ²

A significant relationship between that influential secretary and the agent incognito thus began. At the appointed time Miranda met Vansittart who informed him that Addington had received the letter from Gravesend which he had addressed to Pitt. In a conversation which he carried on in French so that the servant might be kept in ignorance of what was going on, Miranda elucidated his projects to Vansittart. Details of the meeting are found in an account that Miranda composed in his diary:

"I told him that at present I solicited only a small amount of aid in arms and a few men who might be found in America, especially in the islands of Trinidad and Curaçao, and that, if the English Government did not wish to participate in the affair, I had mercantile friends who would furnish me with what was necessary, and with whom we could make the arrangements, provided that the government did not object. * * * With animation he replied 'that the intention was to execute the thing completely and in a large way; that, in his opinion, this was what ought to have been done three years ago; and that, if they now insisted that I should show them the general plan, it was to assure themselves that the enterprise would not be mismanaged and to secure the succor which was necessary when once the project was agreed upon.' * * * During this discussion I formed the idea that the ships and other forces which were necessary should come by way of the Pacific Ocean from India. I said 'that the military plan had already been examined and approved by Sir Ralph Abercromby, and also by Sir Charles Stewart, who, in my judgment, was the commander best fitted to coöperate in this enterprise.' * * * He said to me 'that the person who seemed well fitted to aid us was Sir Sidney Smith, and I agreed.' " ³

² April 29, 1801, Mir. MSS., vol. 47. ³ *Ibid.*



*Nicholas Vansittart. Portrait by William Owen.
In the collection at Christ Church, Oxford
University.*

By indirect methods Miranda, who evidently feared that the United States might get wind of his latest move, got possession of a box containing valuable papers which he had left in the custody of Minister King. He placed some of these in a portfolio and on May 1, 1801, proceeded to another conference with Vansittart. To quote Miranda's journal again:

"He read the plan of military operations that I had prepared in 1799. It appeared magnificent to him. But when I observed 'that at that time we had counted upon the Americans,' he responded to me with alacrity, 'that there was now no need to count upon them for anything.' We carried on a lengthy discussion about the population of the Spanish Indies, about the proportion it contained of Indians to other inhabitants, and, among other things, about the ratio of whites to people of color. * * * He saw the propositions that I made to Pitt in the year 1790 * * * as well as the proposals of 1798 with the data concerning products, commerce, population, land and naval forces, all of which appeared to him satisfactory. He said to me that he had read with much interest the plans formed by Brissot in 1792 for Spanish-American independence.

"Then he said to me, 'at present there is still something lacking, that is, to know the form of government which you intend to establish.' To this I responded that 'I could not dictate a government for the country but I expected that, should the affair continue to prosper, a recommendation from us, if it were wise and prudent, would have an almost decisive effect, and that in our judgment a system of government similar to that of the United States would be very popular and perhaps the most convenient.' He agreed to this but warned us against the influence of foreign immigrants like those who were now distracting North America. He also advised that the voters should own some property, in which we agreed. He then said, 'draw up this project of provisional and federal government in writing and bring it to me tomorrow so that it may be submitted to the judgment of the Minister and a response secured.' 'Oh,' he said to me, 'where will you locate

the capital?" I responded, 'probably on the Isthmus.' " ⁴

On the following day,—so wrote Miranda in his diary,—he proceeded to frame the projects of government. He spent May 3, 1801, amending them. When these were completed, he revised a proclamation to the Spanish Americans that he had drafted in 1798. After Vargas had copied the documents in a clear hand, Miranda submitted them to Vansittart and asked for observations. ⁵ The opening paragraphs of the proclamation read as follows:

"Don Francisco de Miranda, a native of the city of Caracas, to the people of the Colombian Continent who compose the Spanish-American colonies! Dear and brave compatriots:—Empowered by you for some years to labor for the establishment of your independence, we have at last the inexpressible satisfaction of informing you that the epoch of your enfranchisement has arrived. Our entire existence has been consecrated to you; our last efforts will fulfill your ample desires. The time has arrived to drive out the barbarians; the day has come when the rod of iron which the Spanish Government has stretched across the sea will be broken. Remember that you are the descendants of those illustrious Indians who did not wish to survive the enslavement of their country, and who preferred a glorious death to a dishonorable life. Those chosen warriors fell with Montezuma on the walls of the city of Mexico and with Incan leaders on the walls of Quito and Cuzco. Thus they presaged the misfortunes of their posterity. They preferred to die rather than to remain slaves; thus they became victims to their ardent love of liberty. Beyond doubt they perished, but I see them reincarnated among you, more brilliant than ever.

"They are about to establish the independence of their

⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

⁵ "Martin" to Vansittart, May 4, 1801, *ibid.*, declared that he had prepared the "Memoires Politiques" and that he was sending "ci-joint les deux Esquisses demandes." In another letter four days later Miranda asked Vansittart to examine "les Pieces ci-jointes, qui ont ete preparees en vertu de ses ordres, et des observations faites par lui dans notre Conference de Vendredi dernier au Soir," *ibid.* Although the "Esquisse de Gouvernement Federal" bore the date May 2, yet this was evidently the date when it was begun. It is difficult to estimate the influence of Vansittart's political ideas upon Miranda.

country upon the ruins of a destructive government. In an enterprise so important, one that is to render to you that which is yours, it is your duty to make known to the universe the purity of the motives which animate you, and to prove to the Two Worlds that neither vengeance, hatred, nor ingratitude, as our enemies declare, are your sole guides, but that you listen, above all, to the voice of justice and to the imperious sentiment of self-preservation.”⁶

The spirit of these phrases is scarcely typical of the proclamation which occasionally became pedantic. The title by which the Spanish monarchs claimed the Indies was flouted. Satirically did Miranda state that it was based upon “the decree of an Italian bishop.” With some justice he argued that the right of conquest could not properly be urged by Spain as the basis of her territorial claim, for the conquistadors subjugated America at their own expense. Further, he maintained that the Motherland ought now to remove her soldiers from the Spanish Indies and grant the colonists their independence. Have not the Spanish Americans, asked Miranda, sighed for more than three centuries under foreign oppression? Among the examples of mistreatment of the Indians which he cited was the horrible execution at Cuzco of Tupac Amaru, a descendant of the Incas. He appealed to aristocratic colonists by citing such illustrations of Spain’s narrow colonial policy as the fact that a creole could not even leave his native province in order to study art and science in a foreign country without a permit from the government. He spoke of the ruthless or faithless measures by which Spain had quelled rebellions in northern South America. His apprehensions in respect to tendencies in independent Spanish America are set forth in the following passage in which, in a spirit of rodomontade, Miranda unwittingly essayed the rôle of a prophet:

“The most decisive success will be the prize of your generous efforts. If your brothers of North America, who num-

⁶ “C. Proclamation,” *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 47.

bered only three millions, were able by their courage, virtue, and perseverance to establish their independence, why should you not be able to gain freedom with a population of more than fifteen millions who will fight with perseverance under the banners of liberty? * * * In erecting the independence of your country upon the ruins of an oppressive régime, you will spread the renown of your exploits far and wide. You will engrave your names in the temple of memory. The task that you undertake is great and generous; you must be careful not to defeat it by irregular measures. You should always remember that the punishment of a crime is a function only of the tribunals of justice. An assassin remains always an assassin no matter what were his motives. At the juncture when you are about to confound your tyrants you should not imitate their tyranny. It is not your desire to replace an irregular government by an irregular government, to substitute an oppressive régime for an oppressive régime, or to destroy an ancient tyranny in order to erect a new tyranny. In fine, it is not your desire to establish upon the downfall of a foreign despotism the régime of a not less odious despotism, that of license and anarchy!"⁷

In conclusion Miranda invited his compatriots to sanction a series of regulations by which he hoped to preserve justice and public order during hostilities. He proposed that the *cabildos* of "the Colombian Continent" should send to the headquarters of the liberating army delegates who were to form a congress which should establish a provisional government. Roman Catholicism should remain the national religion but all other religious faiths were to be tolerated. The Inquisition was to be swept away. No ecclesiastic was to perform any civil or military functions. The odious and oppressive tribute which had been levied upon the Indians was to be abolished. Not only the aborigines but also the free colored people were "henceforth to enjoy all the rights and privileges" of white citizens. All male citizens between the ages of eighteen and fifty-eight years were to be obliged to take up arms for

⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

the defense of the country and were to conform to any military regulations that might be adopted.⁸ According to a diarial note, Miranda also proposed to distribute among his compatriots copies of a Spanish translation of Viscardo's *Lettre aux Espagnols-Américains* which he had had printed in London.⁹

Miranda's project for the government of the liberated Spanish-American colonies was composed of two parts: a scheme of a "provisional government," and a project of a "federal government." The first clause in the provisional scheme declared that all authority emanating from the Spanish Government was *ipso facto* abolished. Assemblies should be formed from inhabitants belonging to whatever caste either born in the country or settled there, twenty-one years of age, who enjoyed an annual revenue of fifty pesos and who had taken an oath of allegiance to the independent government.

Local officers who had been selected by the Spanish Government were to be replaced by the *cabildos*. Those councils were to increase their membership by one-third, somewhat after the fashion of the special meetings styled *cabildos abiertos*, by members chosen from the Indians and from the colored people of the respective province. Every extraordinary *cabildo* was to select two *alcaldes* who should have charge of justice and police in the respective district during the war. Each of those councils was also to choose one or more citizens from its respective district who should organize an assembly that was to administer the province until a federal government was established. During the revolutionary war the execution of provisional laws was to be intrusted to two citizens who were designated *curacas*, a title evidently borrowed from official titles of the Inca régime.

The existing laws were to remain in force, with certain exceptions, until new legislation was enacted. All personal taxes, such as the tribute levied upon the Indians, were to be abolished. Customs duties were to be reduced to a uniform rate

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

of fifteen per cent on imports and twenty per cent on exports. All laws concerning the Inquisition were to be abrogated. The clause regarding religious faith ran thus: "Religious toleration, being a principle of natural right, will be generally permitted; the Colombian people will always recognize the Apostolic Catholic and Roman religion as their national religion."¹⁰

The provisional scheme of government also contained clauses concerning the management of military affairs. During the war for liberation the armed forces of the revolutionists were to be under the direction of a citizen styled the *hatunapa*. His chief duties were to be the organization of the military forces and the defense of the country. Until the assembly made definite arrangements, the commander in chief was to raise through requisitions the funds that might be necessary for the prosecution of the war. Foreigners who had arrived in Spanish America after the struggle for independence had begun could ordinarily not be admitted to the rights of citizenship. Persons who refused to take an oath of allegiance to the new government were to withdraw into the interior of the country during the war. Any one who should take up arms against Spanish-American independence was to be perpetually expatriated.

More significant than the provisional scheme was the project for a "federal" government. This plan sketched a political system for the emancipated nation. A certain clause provided that citizenship was to be restricted to persons born in Spanish America of free parents and to foreigners married and domiciled there who had taken the oath of fidelity to the new government or who being unmarried had served in the armies of independence during more than three campaigns. The clauses concerning local government resembled those in the provisional scheme.

The provincial assemblies were to choose the members of the general legislature. "This assembly will be designated the

¹⁰ "Esquisse de Gouvernement provisoire," Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

Colombian council," stipulated the constitution, "it will have the sole power to make laws for the entire American federation." As in the project of 1790, stipulations resembling those in the United States Constitution were made for the amendment of the fundamental law. Yet this constitution made provision for only one house of the legislature.

Under normal circumstances the supreme executive power should be vested in two persons chosen from active citizens forty years of age who had previously filled one of the important imperial offices. These officials were to be called Incas, "a name which was venerated in the country." While one Inca was to remain at the capital of the empire, the other Inca was to traverse the provinces. The Incas could appoint censors, ediles, and questors,—officials whose functions much resembled those of the corresponding officials in Miranda's governmental plan of 1790. They were to watch over the general welfare of the empire, and were empowered to defend it against sudden attack, but could not wage an offensive war without the consent of the Colombian council.

In an emergency that council was to decree that a single executive should be chosen. This ruler was to be clothed with all the powers of a Roman dictator but his term of office should not be prolonged beyond one year. The Spanish-American dictator was to be appointed by the Incas from citizens who had attained the age of at least forty-five years and who had already filled one of the important imperial offices. Not without interest to students of United States history is the fact that in a copy of this plan preserved among Miranda's papers the clause concerning the dictator bears an annotation to the effect that it had been suggested by Henry Knox and Alexander Hamilton.¹¹

This plan also contained careful stipulations regarding the judiciary. The judges who were to preside over the provincial

¹¹ "Esquisse de Gouvernement Federal," May 2, 1801, Mir. MSS., vol. 47. This plan and the "Esquisse de Gouvernement provisoire" with slight modifications as transmitted by Miranda to Spanish America in 1808 are printed in Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 520-25.

courts were to be appointed by the provisional assemblies with the consent of the executive power. Local courts were to be patterned after tribunals in England and the United States. The mode of trial should be by jury. A special type of jury was, however, to be established until the mass of citizens were more conversant with liberty. The supreme court of the nation was to be composed of a president and two other members chosen by the executive power from federal judges. It was to have jurisdiction over cases relating to international law, cases arising from treaties with foreign nations, and cases concerning the misdeeds of federal magistrates.

Roman Catholicism was declared to be the religion of the nation. Complete religious toleration was, however, to be observed. Priests and ministers of the gospel, as well as notaries and lawyers were to be excluded from all civil and military offices.

The plan of federal government, unlike Miranda's project of 1790, did not delimit the dominions that were to belong to the nation. The Spanish-American state that Miranda now dreamed of establishing was evidently to be composed of more territory than the Captaincy General of Venezuela; for the capital city was to be erected at the most central point, "perhaps on the Isthmus of Panama." That city was to bear "the celebrated name of Colombo" in honor of the Great Discoverer. "If one adopts the name Colombia to designate the new republic," reasoned Miranda, in an annotation inscribed upon his copy of the plan, "the inhabitants ought to be called Colombianos; this name is more sonorous and majestic than Colombinos." ¹²

To an Anglo-American mind the term "federal" applied to the plan was a misnomer. Perhaps the most significant feature of this project for a constitutional government in Spanish America is that it aimed to establish there an empire or an imperial republic rather than a federation or a pure republic. In fact there were in the Spanish Indies no bases for the or-

¹² Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

ganization of a federal system such as those which existed in the Thirteen Colonies. The plans sketched in 1801, which in the main represented Miranda's mature ideas about the political organization of independent Spanish America, provided for a more centralized and monarchical type of government than the projects of 1790. The proposal for a dictator would seem to indicate a keen appreciation by the incognito revolutionary of the actual needs of his compatriots. Perhaps he dreamed that some day he might reach that eminence himself. In this respect Miranda's project resembles the Plan of Iguala by which Agustín de Iturbide became Emperor of Mexico.

In all likelihood Francisco de Miranda was the chief author of these plans. He had undoubtedly made a study of various political systems. As in the scheme of 1790, he had drawn inspiration from the history of Rome. The use of such terms as *curaca* and *hatunapa* indicate that he had studied the Inca governmental system. The provisions concerning religious toleration were the result of his observations in England and the United States. Obviously he now proposed to utilize certain institutions that were firmly rooted in the Spanish colonial system. Especially noteworthy was his design to use the *cabildos* which offered a prospect for the development of local government. In truth, Miranda's national plan of 1801 derives significance from the fact that it was a unique proposal to superimpose a representative government of a monarchical type upon modified Spanish institutions.

The Sieyès of Spanish America must have been influenced by the political ideas of Pitt, Turnbull, and Vansittart. He felt the need of improving his governmental plans as will be shown by a letter to Pownall written at a linen draper's shop in Westminster.

"Here I am again my dear and worthy friend; and the object that brings me is always the same. The new ministers received me with friendship and with very good grace. Conferences accordingly opened at once, and after a thorough dis-

cussion of the political and military plans, we are on the eve of a definitive decision. Turnbull believes that it can only be favorable, and he bases this upon the zeal and approbation which one of the principal ministers manifested to him concerning the enterprise. I admit to you that because of the attitude that I have noticed on the part of those members of the Government with whom I have had occasion to communicate we should expect a happy outcome; but as I have been much concerned in this matter, I will not believe anything until all is completed.

"After an agreement was reached in regard to the military and political objects, the ministers asked me for my scheme of provisional government as well as for my project of a permanent government. For good or ill they were framed and transmitted in two days, accompanied by a proclamation that should precede everything else. In this manner a simple fiat will decide the whole affair:—the juncture could not be more favorable!

"Everything is being done in the greatest secrecy, and without the Americans knowing anything about it—Turnbull is the only person (on the outside) who has been initiated; and this is the reason why I have not written to the respectable Mr. Faulkner but have remained here in the strictest incognito during the twenty days since my arrival. But I certainly need your counsel, my wise coöperator, especially to correct and perfect the legislative project. In the name of humanity and in the name of all my compatriots for whom you have already done so much, I beg you to come to me as soon as possible. In this flattering expectation, I remain always your unalterable friend,

M———.

"P. S. I bear the name of F. Martin—and if you should write to me address the letter in an envelope to Mr. Turnbull—I have a million things to communicate to you—The secret of my arrival here is an essential thing for success. May 14 at 12 o'clock." ¹³

Pownall replied in a prosy letter couched in these words:

¹³ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

“I receiv’d this day your Letter dated the 14th Inst. Your incognito is not so guarded, but that I heard several daies past of your arrival.—I waited to hear from you before I wou’d address any letter to you, lest I might make a blunder.

“I receiv’d your letter written from Paris, wherein you mention the *speculation of sending your Books* to Petersburg. I answer’d it, and sent my answer to yr. friend T. desiring him to get a certain minister to forward it to you. It was conceiv’d in the same stile on the subject of books: desiring you to get for me from the National Institute a Drawing of the Ancient Chariot Wheels at Kars, and a specific description of them: Also to offer them a communication of a Paper of mine on the Hieroglyphic and Elementary writing of the Egyptians. It is of no great import whether you receiv’d it or not, it was intirely guarded on literary topics which you would understand.

“As I have nothing so much at heart as the *object tojours le même*, which you mention, it is with the purest cordia joy that I hear from you, the hopes which you express of its being revived and again taken up. There is nothing I would not do, nor any trouble which I wou’d not take in my power to promote it. But as I first introduced you to Ministers on this point: You must now introduce me as connected in it from its first proposition, to our present Ministers whom I am totally unknown to. You must inform them of the part I have always had in it, and that I am ready, if they have no objection or desire it to renew my operations in it. For be assured that if I was to interpose my Labours, or you to communicate with me unknown to them or without their consent, or without their desiring it, my interposition would only spoil the good effect to be expected from it. You must therefore 1. acquaint them of the Part which I have had in it from its first proposition, and have their leave to communicate with me, and of the desire you have of my assistance. 2. that they will, in such way as they choose, signifye their desire that I should.—I will attend such desire without hesitation or the loss of a moment.—No time in the interim shall be lost, I will directly turn my thoughts to it, so as to recall all that has passed; and to ar-

range all that may remain to be done on its present revival.
 Ever and unalterably
 Yr friend

Bath May 15 / 1801

T. Pownall."

"Sir Robert Abercromby the Brother of S^r. Ralph Abercromby is here. It has so happened that we have talked over the Business, as intended when S^r. Ralph Abercromby was to have had the command [of] it—And he says. 'What Pity it did not take Place—it was clear that it must have succeeded.' I find he had the Secret communicated to him—" ¹⁴

After an auspicious beginning, the negotiations lagged. A letter to Miranda on May 14 suggested the predicament of the English Government as conceived by Vansittart. That Secretary much regretted "the delay which has taken place in Mr. Martin's business. He is sensible that from its nature it requires a particular degree of dispatch and celerity. At the same time Mr. M. must be aware that until the issue of certain events is distinctly known it is impossible for Govt. to decide upon the part to be taken." ¹⁵ Five days later Vansittart sent a note to Miranda to arrange another conference. ¹⁶ When they met, the Secretary returned some papers, saying in frigid tones to the promoter that the English Government could not "spare a large enough body of soldiers" to undertake the project until it learned about the events that had occurred in Egypt. In his journal Miranda wrote that Vansittart gave him assurances that England would nevertheless enable him to begin operations by furnishing a loan of money, a good frigate, and a few small warships, besides some arms, munitions, artillery, and officers. Then the diary continues:

"I asked him if England was disposed to aid us in the main-

¹⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 47. On May 25, 1801, Pownall wrote a letter to Miranda that began as follows: "Inclosed I send off to the Service in which your heart is engaged, My Project of Legislation for the Emancipation of a Great Portion of Mankind to Independence and Liberty, in whose cause, as you justly observe, we have been Co-operators for these eleven years past; and for the Establishment of a True Representative Government, suited to the circumstances of the Country, and to the Habits, Manners, and Circumstances of the Inhabitants, founded on old foundations," *ibid.* ¹⁵ *Ibid.* ¹⁶ *Ibid.*

tenance of our independence? To which he responded affirmatively. He said that in a very short time England would send a considerable body of soldiers to coöperate with us. I also asked if the proclamation and the projects of government seemed good to him. To this he responded in affirmative terms but said that certain minor clauses ought to be slightly modified. He declared that above all the English wished that no one should be deprived of his property; that people should not be killed in cold blood; that religion should be maintained, allowing that an arrangement should be made with the Pope about this; and that the abolition of the Inquisition as well as the establishment of religious toleration were very just measures. * * *

"I also inquired what payment England would ask for her aid, as it would be convenient to have that matter understood in advance so that there might be no disagreement later. His reply was very brief and clear: 'We do not ask any more than to be permitted to trade with those countries on the same basis as other nations, being treated as the most friendly nation.' * * * Then we proceeded to make a list of the articles that were needed in order to get ready with dispatch, for promptness was most necessary. Lord St. Vincent was very active and everything would have to be submitted to him."¹⁷

Under Miranda's direction, on May 19, 1801, a list was prepared of the articles required for the equipment of 12,000 or 15,000 men composed of cavalry and infantry. Among the military supplies specified were 6,000 to 12,000 muskets, bayonets, and cartridge boxes, 1,000 to 2,000 saddles and bridles, 1,000 to 4,000 sabres, 2,000 pairs of pistols, 5,000 to 10,000 pikes, 3,000 to 10,000 uniforms, 3,000 cutlasses, 10,000 short swords, some 50 pieces of artillery, 5,000 cannon cartridges, 400,000 flints, and 1,500,000 small arm cartridges. Besides 12 flags, the expedition should be furnished with 12 to 20 standards bearing as a device "the Rain Bow, the Figure of *Liberté* with the name *Colombia*, and the following Motto—*Pro Aris et Focis*."

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

A large supply of mattocks, hatchets, pickaxes, shovels, billhooks, and broadaxes was also to be furnished. Four surgeons were to be provided as well as some medicine chests. In addition there were to be 2 printing presses. Miranda evidently expected that many soldiers would be recruited in the English West Indies; for this list specified that only 4,000 infantry, one company of artillery, some artillery officers, engineers, infantry, and light cavalry, besides drummers and musicians, were to accompany the expedition from England.¹⁸ A supplementary memorandum prepared by Rutherford mentioned certain officers who should be employed and suggested that in the English contingent there should be included "drill sergeants and Riding masters to instruct the new levies."¹⁹

On May 24, 1801, in a conference at Lincoln's Inn with Vansittart and Sir Evan Nepean, who had served for years as secretary of the admiralty, Miranda explained his plans for the expedition against the Spanish Indies.²⁰ On the following day he sent to Vansittart a statement concerning those military operations about which they had evidently agreed. This memorandum contained proposals for an attack on northern South America. The rendezvous of the attacking force was to be at Curaçao where artillery, infantry, and cavalry were to be gathered with a generous supply of flags, uniforms, arms, and munitions. The point of disembarkation was to be the town of Coro in Venezuela. There a military camp was to be formed after the Roman fashion, and native forces were to be gathered for use in attacks on San Felipe, Nirgua, and Valencia. Then the invaders were to proceed into the beautiful valleys of Aragua. As they advanced,—thus reasoned Miranda,—they would enlist large numbers of recruits. While revolutionists were marching to the gates of the capital city,

¹⁸ "Necessaries for the Arming a Corps of 12 to 15,000 Men as well infantry as Cavalry," Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

¹⁹ "Col. Rutherford's memorandum," *ibid.*

²⁰ Miranda to Nepean, May 24, 1801, *ibid.* On May 21 Miranda had written to Turnbull to complain that his absence from London had delayed the completion of his arrangements. On May 22 the merchant replied that he would return at once, *ibid.*

English warships from Grenada or Trinidad should threaten a bombardment of Cumaná and La Guaira. Miranda's hypothesis was that the small size of the forces which could be mustered to the defense of any one of these points, as well as the disaffection of the inhabitants, would assure the success of the invaders. He thought that after the capture of the city of Caracas additional native reënforcements would join them and that La Guaira could then also be attacked by land. The promoter proceeded with much optimism:

"Thus there would be conquered the entire Captaincy General which is thickly populated, very rich, and one of the most flourishing regions in America. Its inhabitants are much inclined toward independence and have close liaisons with the Biscayan merchants of the country who desire emancipation with as much ardor as the creoles themselves. The governor of Trinidad could make himself the master of Angostura in order to penetrate the Orinoco River as far as Bogotá." ²¹

Protected by English vessels, the invading forces were to advance from the province of Caracas upon Santa Marta and thus to provoke an insurrection in the Viceroyalty of New Granada. Before long, said Miranda, the fortress of Cartagena would open its gates, and the town of Teneriffe, which was located at a strategic point on the river Magdalena, would be captured. Soldiers should then be disembarked at Chagres on the Isthmus of Panama. Miranda did not anticipate a protracted resistance by the town of Panama; for the governor, he believed, would aid any attacking force. He maintained that these operations could be executed in four or five months; their success would also decide the fate of Chile and Peru. A small maritime force should, however, be dispatched to the Pacific Ocean. With this communication he sent data concerning the necessary supplies, a list of officers who were to be consulted about the operations, and the names of disaffected natives of northern South America who were sojourning in

²¹ Inclosure in Miranda to Vansittart, May 25, 1801, *ibid.*

the British or the Dutch West Indies.²²

At this juncture Miranda framed a series of military regulations for the guidance of members of the expedition. A preamble to these rules stated that in "a free government the laws are sovereign and all the citizens are subjects." Soldiers and officers were alike declared to be responsible "to the civil authorities for any infraction of the laws of the country." The regulations were arranged in three divisions or, as they were styled after the Spanish fashion, titles. Title I was composed of twenty-three penal laws. Title II concerned crimes that were to be judged by the police court of the army. Title III contained provisions respecting military discipline. In addition, these regulations included stipulations about a general military court, a military police court, and a tribunal for military discipline. A certain article provided that any soldier who might use his arms to resist the police or the army patrols should be punished by death. Any soldier who became inebriated while in the service was to be sentenced to labor in the camp; for the second offense he was to be condemned to labor on public works for one year. A soldier who stole from the inhabitants was to be sentenced to ten years of hard labor. If the robbery had been accompanied by any mistreatment of the people, the offender should be punished by death. Any one who might receive women of evil habits was to be ignominiously cast out of the army.²³

Despite encouraging words from Vansittart, Miranda became extremely impatient of the delay made by English ministers in the execution of his project. In his diary under date of June 4, 1801, he formulated a series of propositions for presentation to Turnbull. Among these was a proposal that he should be allowed soon to proceed to the West Indies, and that England should aid him by furnishing money, officers, and supplies for the emancipation of South America. He also proposed that before his departure he should have a conference with Lord St. Vincent, Mr. Addington, and Lord Hobart,

²² Mir. MSS., vol. 47. ²³ "D. Reglamento militar," *ibid.*

who was secretary of state for war and the colonies.²⁴ A week later Secretary Vansittart wrote to Miranda to express regret at the delay in the execution of a project in which they were both much interested. Special circumstances, he said, had made necessary a further postponement of the "definitive decision of the British Government."²⁵ On the same day Miranda addressed a letter to Vansittart to declare that he wished the government to make a decision immediately. Further, he stated that he had decided after mature reflection to leave England accompanied "with the least succor."²⁶ In the last half of June, 1801, he addressed two letters to that Secretary to urge the need of immediate steps by the government if the Spanish Indies were to be saved from the yoke of France; he even expressed his willingness to renounce English aid, if he were permitted to leave London for the West Indies.²⁷ On June 20 Turnbull reassured Miranda thus: "At last I have received a note from Mr. Vansittart, requesting me to advance you as far as £300 towards discharging such Expenses as you may have incurred."²⁸

Miranda carried on discussions with Rutherford, Turnbull, and Vansittart. On July 9 he inscribed in his diary that at a dinner attended by those enthusiasts Vansittart gave a toast wishing success to the rainbow. On the next day Miranda noted that Pownall had read the projects of government, and that after he had "proposed some slight alterations," they "were in agreement about them." Miranda added that this approbation gave him great satisfaction; for the ex-governor was "a person of science and sobriety" who had much considered the matter, and who was as much interested in the success of his revolutionary plans as himself.²⁹ On July 16 he sent Vansittart translations of his governmental projects so that they might be shown to Lord St. Vincent.³⁰ On the following day Miranda wrote that a decision had been reached

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ June 11, 1801, *ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Miranda to Vansittart, June 17 and 19, 1801, *ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Diario, ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

about the color of the uniform to be worn by the soldiers: the jacket of the infantry should be red, the waistcoat white, and the trousers blue. He also recorded a rumor that Lord St. Vincent was seeking for officers to lead the auxiliary contingent. With reluctance did he notice that an English commander had been proposed for the management of the expedition until Caracas had been captured and a new government formed.³¹

At this juncture the incendiary was brought to the attention of the English public in an unenviable manner. During a suit in the court of King's Bench regarding Allwood's contraband transactions in the West Indies the Attorney General ironically mentioned General Miranda as "a man who had always shown himself ready to enter into any plan that forwarded his own interest; and it was equally the same to him whether he drew his sword for Spain, England, or the French Republic, provided those who employed him paid for his services."³² It is probable that this characterization of himself as a soldier of fortune provoked the statement which in a diarial note Miranda declared that he had made to Colonel Rutherford, namely, that if an English expedition should be dispatched to the Spanish Indies he "would never for a moment consent that a foreign force should exercise any authority in the country or assume the rôle of a conqueror there. I would only serve under the American Standard."³³

A serious question about the relation which ought to prevail between General Miranda and the English commander of an expedition to South America, was apparently first raised at the residence of Lord Hobart on July 13. Besides Miranda, there were present at this conference, Vansittart, Lord Hobart, a trusted official named Sullivan, and Lord St. Vincent. An inquiry was made concerning who should command the English auxiliary forces when they disembarked in South America. "I replied," wrote Miranda in his diary, "that this should be the person who commanded the American forces

³¹ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

³² *Morning Post*, July 14, 1801. ³³ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

which, united under the standard of independence, composed the American army.' 'Very good,' said Sullivan and Vansittart, 'this will be when they have formed a government, and when that government has appointed a commander in chief, but before this is done the English commander cannot obey an authority that is not sanctioned by the people.' "

Miranda responded that such a policy would lead to the subjugation of the Indies by foreign soldiers aided by Spanish Americans. It seems likely that he made the remark which he attributed to himself: "I, for my part, will never draw my sword against any Spanish American except under the standard of American liberty." Not without reason did he maintain that otherwise the enemies of England would be justified in saying that, aided by "the perfidious Miranda who, selling his country and his compatriots, had formed plans and furnished the means," under the pretence of giving independence to the Spanish Indies, she had conquered that region in a fashion similar to that in which she had subjugated India.³⁴

As a solution for this crucial problem Miranda proposed that the English Government should select a special agent who in conjunction with himself was to determine what the auxiliary forces from England should do before they were formally placed at the disposition of Spanish America. Among persons whom he suggested for this rôle were Governor Picton and Thomas Pownall. In a letter to Pownall the revolutionary proposed that the ex-governor should serve as England's commissioner "with full authority to decide upon the field all the difficulties which might arise between an English army and Spanish-American soldiers or between a Spanish-American government and English military authorities." Miranda ventured the prediction that an English expedition for the liberation of Spanish America seemed certain unless some very extraordinary, unforeseen event should take place.³⁵ It is perhaps not without significance that on July 13 Pownall wrote to Miranda to offer that when the Colombians became

³⁴ *Diario, ibid.*

³⁵ Undated, *ibid.*

independent he would act as "their accredited agent" in England, provided they would clothe him with sufficient authority.³⁶ Thus step by step the ex-governor withdrew from the negotiation regarding Spanish-American emancipation. The last expression of his views was in *A Memorial of the Sovereigns of Europe and the Atlantic* published in 1803 in which he declared that the Spanish colonists in South America were "at the crisis of an explosion to independency, which the government of old Spain hath not the power to prevent or to resist."³⁷

The negotiations between Miranda and members of the Addington ministry are significant because they were largely responsible for the definite formulation of the promoter's political plans. In his imagination he saw rising upon the ruins of the Spanish Empire in the New World a congeries of states or more likely a huge imperial state. That state he evidently intended to designate Colombia; its capital should be on the Isthmus of Panama. Although he figured sanguinely upon vigorous assistance from his fellow countrymen, yet the crux of his proposed politico-military operations lay as he now perceived, in the selection of a military commander for the English forces.

It appears that in 1801 Miranda scarcely hoped that England would concede this command to him. At no time did he approach a more practical solution of the problem than at this juncture when he proposed the choice of a commissioner who was to accompany the expeditionary forces,—a commissioner who was to be satisfactory to him as well as to the English Government. A keen student of the policies pursued by European governments toward the disintegrating Spanish Empire, he did not fail to discern the imminent danger that, if his plans were once accepted, English redcoats might undertake the conquest instead of the liberation of South America. Though it seems that he was willing to make concessions to English commerce in the emancipated regions, yet it is clear

³⁶ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

³⁷ Pownall, *Thomas Pownall*, p. 459.

that on this occasion he would not have agreed to any concession of territory. Thus he refused to contemplate any step that might facilitate the founding in his native continent of an English protectorate. He had sold his arm to no one.

Chapter XII

HOPES AND FEARS

THE INCOGNITO promoter continued to press his plans upon Addington's ministers. On August 30 he proposed that two hundred men and a warship should be prepared for immediate departure. But in a cabinet conference in September, which seriously considered the revolutionizing of Spanish America, the Home Secretary maintained that twelve thousand men were necessary to initiate such a movement. Again, he argued that he could not agree to an attack which would have such far-reaching results without precise knowledge about the principles and ulterior views of the revolutionists.

Further, by this time the great rivals were almost ready for peace. Napoleon's arms had proved victorious on the Continent, while England remained Mistress of the Sea. The titanic conflict was brought to a pause on October 1, 1801, by the Preliminaries of London in which England and France agreed to reciprocal restorations of territory. Vexed by fluctuations of fortune, Miranda's mood was far from enviable. With the cessation of hostilities, and the elaboration of the Preliminaries of London into a definitive treaty, his hope of immediate and effective aid from England in the accomplishment of his darling project was shattered. On October 6 he wrote to Vansittart to implore news about the surprising event which had cast him into a terrible condition of desolation and uncertainty. Yet he admitted that the hint which had reached him through Rutherford and Turnbull that the English Government proposed to offer him "generous succor" had given him some comfort.¹

A side light is indeed cast upon Miranda's relations with the Addington ministry by an inquiry concerning his means of support. Gold from Russia he could not secure because of the death of Catherine II. There is no evidence to show that

¹ Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

he was now receiving any money from his relatives. In truth, his chief financial support at this juncture was, in his own words, "an invaluable old friend."² Itemized statements filed away among his papers show that prior to May 1, 1799, large sums had been advanced to him by John Turnbull.³ The most exact account of the expenditures from January, 1798, to October 10, 1800, for which Miranda himself was directly responsible, including the interest thereon, is his own signed memorandum that is headed:

"£2,227, - 6.

"I hereby declare that the Amount of the within account was advanced to me by Messrs. Turnbull, Forbes and Co. for the purpose of assisting me and others concerned with me, in endeavoring to give Liberty and independency to Spanish America, and to establish firm and advantegious connections between that Country and Gt. Britain—and that they were induced to do so in great measure by the favorable reception I met with from Mr. Pitt on my arrival in this Country in the year 1798, for the purpose of carrying into execution the Stipulation agreed upon in the year 1790 at Hollwood between the government of England and South America; which sum I shall pay with my own when circumstances shall permit me."⁴

On June 4, 1801, Miranda wrote to Secretary Vansittart that his preparations for a South American expedition had involved him in certain expenses "within the limits agreed upon" and that he hoped the English Government would authorize Turnbull to defray them.⁵ The result of Miranda's importunities was the Secretary's assurance in October, 1801, that the English Government proposed to make him "an allowance of £500 a year in England" and that it might also make "some arrangements" about "the incumbrances" which

² Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, p. 261.

³ Turnbull's "Note of Sums at General Miranda's debit not included in the annexed note," Mir. MSS., vol. 22.

⁴ "General Miranda in Account Current with Turnbull, Forbes & Co., with Interest to 10th. October, 1800," *ibid.*, vol. 47. ⁵ *Ibid.*

he had mentioned.⁶ This did not satisfy Miranda, however, for on October 23 he addressed a letter to Vansittart based upon the understanding that he would continue to reside in England and making four propositions: that he should be granted an annuity of seven hundred pounds, that he should be given one thousand pounds with which to pay his debts, that John Turnbull should be reimbursed for money which he had advanced on his behalf in 1799, and that this merchant should also be paid two thousand guineas for advances made to him in 1801. Miranda declared that he had always shown his desire to remain in London, if a competent income and the payment of his debts were assured him,—otherwise he would be compelled to depart from English soil.⁷

It is to be presumed that the petitioner did not secure from the English Treasury all that he demanded. A letter which he subsequently addressed to Vansittart shows that at this time the English Government granted him an allowance of five hundred pounds per annum.⁸ Whatever was the exact nature of the other adjustments which he reached with the ministers, it is clear that in the end of 1801 Miranda was so far satisfied with his financial situation that he had decided to remain in London. In a disingenuous letter to a French friend he alleged that funds from his family had at last reached him, and that he had been able to provide for himself an income in England.⁹

Documents found in his own papers enable us to interpret the last part of this assertion. In an account of Turnbull and Forbes against the English Government figures are presented showing that from May, 1801, to July, 1802, to meet expenditures arising from Miranda's activities this firm had disbursed funds that aggregated over twenty-one thousand pounds. Among these disbursements there were in round numbers the following items: "To amount Mr. Davidson's account about £10,500 paid in part by a Warrant granted to Mr.

⁶ Oct. 22, 1801, Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

⁷ *Ibid.* ⁸ Miranda to Vansittart, Aug. 24, 1803, *ibid.*

⁹ Miranda to Barthélemy, Dec. 15, 1801, Mir. MSS., vol. 47.

Turnbull for his Trouble," ten thousand pounds; to Faden, for maps, sixteen pounds; to Caston and Company, for printing types, one hundred and eighty pounds; to Arding, for a printing press, ninety-five pounds; to Berge, an optician, seventy-five pounds; to Hatchett and Company, coachmakers, two hundred and fifty pounds; to Cuff, a saddler, two hundred and seventy pounds; and to Henry Tatham, a sword-maker, eight hundred pounds. In addition, besides several cash payments to "Mr. Martin" that amounted to more than one thousand pounds, and a payment to Chauveau Lagarde because of a sum of four hundred pounds distributed by him at Paris on Miranda's account, there was this entry, "Amount of Sundry Sums paid to General Miranda as pr. acct. certified by him," £2227-6; "Interest on ditto to 13th. Octr., 1801, when we recovered payment of the Warrant, £112-5-3." ¹⁰

In a supplementary account of articles purchased by the English Government through Rutherford that aggregated some two thousand four hundred pounds are these items: to Tatham and Egg for one thousand swords and four hundred belts, eight hundred pounds; to two "Seals of Office purchased by Mr. Martin," twenty-six pounds; and to one "Stand of Colours," thirteen pounds. This account was followed by a postscript: "N. B. All these articles were paid for by orders on Messrs. Turnbull, Forbes, and Co. and the Vouchers transmitted to Mr. Sullivan." ¹¹ These expenditures were obviously made by England to prepare the way for a South American expedition.

Meantime Miranda lost no chance of presenting his views. When his earlier sympathizer, Thomas Graves,—who had been made an admiral because of his valiant service as second in command under Lord Nelson at the battle of Copenhagen,—reached Yarmouth, Miranda sent him the following greeting composed, like many of his letters, in French:

¹⁰ "The British Government Dr. to Turnbull, Forbes & Co.," *ibid.*

¹¹ "General Account of Articles purchased on account of and by order of Government," *ibid.*

"My dear Admiral: Allow one of your former friends to congratulate you upon your brilliant success. Upon my arrival in this country I did not fail to inquire for news about you from our mutual friends Turnbull and McArthur—and I hope that we shall have the pleasure of meeting you in London one of these days.

"The old projects for the true liberty of the New World, which in former times so much interested your generous soul, have unfortunately not been executed, in spite of repeated and very earnest efforts. Shall we always be unfortunate and without success in what is perhaps the most just, the most practicable, and the most beneficent enterprise that has ever been undertaken for the benefit of men? To me this seems incredible! And if you wish to take the trouble of reading the book of M. de Pradt concerning the colonies, which has been recently published in Paris, you will be convinced that this undertaking will soon take place and cannot fail of success.

"Finally, take care of yourself; send me the news, and allow me still to count you in the number of *Philo Colombiens*.

"P. S. Letters will reach me safely when addressed in care of Messrs. Turnbull, Forbes, and Co., London."¹²

On January 16 the admiral made this response from the *Monarch* at Yarmouth Roads:

"Your letter of the 18th instant from London has given me great pleasure and I feel myself highly flattered by your congratulations and the credit you give me for those sentiments you so eminently possess and that are so honorable to human nature.—I do assure you it will give me great satisfaction to meet you and our benevolent, much enlightened and amiable friend Mr. Turnbull in London, to whom I shall enclose this letter.—When you see our sensible and honorable friend Mr. McArthur I beg you will remember me to him with sincere regard.—I shall with infinite pleasure read l'ouvrage de Mr. de Pradt sur les Colonies and most ardently wish for an opportunity of assisting the South Americans in their emancipation and hope the period is not far distant when we shall

¹² Jan. 16, 1802. Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

both be displaying the banners of Liberty on the shores of South America, and that our efforts may be under the auspices of this Country is the Sincere wish of him who has the honour to be

With unfeigned regard

My Dear General

Yours most faithfully

Thos. Graves."¹⁸

The treaty negotiated at Amiens in March, 1802, by Joseph Bonaparte and the skillful Talleyrand with Minister Merry and the drowsy Cornwallis followed in the main the provisions concerning the restoration of conquests that were laid down in the Preliminaries of London. Of the peace which was arranged it was aptly said that everybody in England was glad but nobody was proud. However the convention had been made by Cornwallis in such a bungling fashion that it led to the restoration of almost all the French colonies while it did not safeguard English commerce against Gallic aggression. In particular, the Treaty of Amiens left two storm centers in Europe: the French were not bound to withdraw their soldiers from the Dutch Netherlands, while the English were to restore Malta to the moribund Knights of St. John. What wonder that there were statesmen in England who believed that this treaty was scarcely more than a truce! When Parliament sanctioned it, at the proposal of Lord Hawkesbury the House of Commons adopted a motion expressing confidence that the King would defend the nation's resources against encroachment and that his subjects would at any time support the honor of the crown and the liberties of their country with the same energy, zeal, and fortitude which they had manifested in the war that had just terminated.

During the ensuing lull in hostilities the Spanish Indies were not forgotten either by Miranda or by English statesmen. In the spring of 1803 Addington informed Minister Rufus King that, if war should again break out, perhaps one

¹⁸ Jan. 20, 1802, *ibid.*

of the earliest measures of his government would be to occupy New Orleans.¹⁴ On his part, through correspondence with Vargas, who was now in Trinidad, Miranda kept informed about the conditions in South America. On February 6, 1803, that emissary wrote to Miranda to inform him of the death of Gual, to state that an agent who had been sent by that compatriot to the adjacent continent had been captured, and to allege that Governor Picton was hostile to their plans.¹⁵ On March 19 Vargas reported that Picton had stigmatized the patriots of South America as "Jacobins," and that though the creoles lacked a leader yet conditions in the province of Caracas remained favorable to an insurrection. He averred that there were many people in Trinidad who would support a movement for Spanish-American independence. He declared that various persons had mentioned Miranda to him as the future redeemer of South America.¹⁶

Englishmen who hoped for peace with France were rudely startled by the King's message to Parliament on March 8, 1803, in which he complained of hostile preparations in French ports and recommended that measures should be taken for the security of his dominions. Five days later at an audience in the Tuileries in agitated tones the First Consul said to the English Ambassador, Lord Whitworth, that England was determined to re-open hostilities. " 'The English are bent on war,' said Napoleon, 'but if they are the first to draw the sword I shall be the last to put it back into the scabbard. They do not respect treaties.' " ¹⁷

The opinion of some military men in England was reflected by the artist Joseph Farington who wrote in his *Diary* under date of March 22 that he had conversed with an English captain who thought that war was "most probable. That Any Peace with Buonaparte can only be considered as an armed truce, and that it may be best to bring the question 'Whether he can subjugate this Country' to issue." ¹⁸ Indeed the nego-

¹⁴ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 352, note e. ¹⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 48. ¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Browning, *England and Napoleon*, p. 116. ¹⁸ *Diary*, II, 88.

tiations between England and France sorely tried the Treaty of Amiens. Eventually in terms that were little short of an ultimatum England demanded to be allowed to retain Malta, a key to Egypt. Unable to obtain an affirmative response to his proposals, on May 12, 1803, Lord Whitworth demanded his passport. Four days later Parliament was notified that a rupture had taken place between England and France. Thus the dogs of war were again unleashed.

Miranda's hopes of English aid in the execution of his plans had meantime revived. On April 3 Minister King wrote to Secretary Pickering and expressed the opinion that, if war broke out, "Great Britain will immediately attempt the emancipation and independence of South America."¹⁹ After receiving a letter from Vansittart making a date for a conference, Miranda wrote a diarial note which stated that an agreement had been reached that the armament and supplies which had been prepared for an expedition should be at once sent to Trinidad "in order that there may be no delay in our operations against France." Miranda fondly imagined that, if his operations were successful, and if an assembly of South Americans should decide in favor of independence, a proposal might be made to Spain for an amicable separation from her colonies.²⁰

But the revolutionary promoter soon decided to trim his sails to suit the shifting winds. By May 17 he had modified his plans. On that day he drew up a memoir in Spanish which was intended for English ministers. His proposition was that England should furnish him with arms and munitions, with colored soldiers from her contingents at Trinidad, and with some transports and warships. Then he added:

"Insignificant though this force is, it will be sufficient to give the necessary impulsion upon the Continent, if one considers that the mass of the inhabitants are awaiting us with impatience, and that the majority of the Spaniards at Trini-

¹⁹ I. & A., Despatches from England, vol. 10.

²⁰ April 2, 1803, Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

dad are desirous to join us for this purpose, as one may see by an extract from the letters of commissioner Vargas. * * * This simple exposé will suffice to convince the ministers of His Britannic Majesty of the necessity in which I find myself of obeying the voice of the Motherland that calls me to her succor at a moment which is really dangerous. Consequently I hope that they will have the goodness to grant me without delay transportation to Trinidad with whatever succor their wisdom may deem suitable to grant."²¹

A translation of this memoir was sent by Miranda to Lord St. Vincent. That nobleman expressed regret that "the state of his health" prevented him from having the honor of seeing the promoter.²² Miranda soon sent an impatient letter to Vansittart expressing his keen desire to sail for the New World.²³ This secretary responded as follows: "No decision has yet been taken about America; thus I do not know what advice to give you, except that you should await the outcome of events which cannot be long postponed."²⁴ In a diarial jotting annexed to that letter Miranda thus recorded his keen disappointment: "This advice is tendered after I have been officially assured that orders had been given to embark for Trinidad the armament which has been in readiness for us here for two years, and that in case war should break out anew, we should be given aid without fail. Further, when my friend Mr. King was about to embark for New York in May last and proposed that I should sail with him because his friends there would furnish me with the necessary aid, these people advised me not to proceed for they were preparing to aid us with what we needed."²⁵ We may again safely conclude that in deciding to postpone an attack on Spanish America the English ministers had been influenced by the prevailing fear of French designs.

Divers means were adopted in England to intensify or to deride the notion of an impending invasion. Among these were patriotic tracts, libellous biographies, wild tales of atrocities

²¹ A Londres, ce 29 Avril, 1803," Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

²² St. Vincent to Miranda, May 19, 1803, *ibid.*

²³ June 11, 1803, *ibid.*

²⁴ Undated, *ibid.* ²⁵ "ce 18 Juin 1803," *ibid.*

perpetrated by French armies, and parodies on Napoleon's proclamations. Sometimes these lampoons took the form of playbills, like the following attributed to Theatre Royal: "In Rehearsal, and meant to be speedily *attempted*, a farce in one act called The Invasion of England. Principal Buffo, Mr. Buonaparte, being his first (and most likely his last) appearance on this stage." A passage from the "Anticipated Critique" of that farce reads thus: "We don't know exactly what this gentleman's merits may be on the tragic boards of France, but he will never succeed here; his figure is very diminutive, he struts a great deal, seems to have no conception of his *character*, and treads the stage very badly; notwithstanding which defects, we think if he comes here, he will get an *engagement*, though it is probable that he will shortly after be reduced to the situation of a *scene-shifter*." ²⁶

Gillray drew a cartoon entitled the "King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver." In satiric literature Napoleon was ridiculed as a "*man tiger*," a pigmy, "a *small* thing, that has made a *great* pother." At theatres songs were sung that breathed defiance to the prospective invaders. The first stanza of a song entitled "The Island," ran as follows:

If the French have a notion
Of crossing the ocean.
Their luck to be trying on dry land;
They may come if they like,
But we'll soon make 'em strike
To the lads of the tight little Island!

Though Miranda apparently did not partake of this dread of a Napoleonic invasion, yet he temporarily relinquished hope of English coöperation. On July 12 he framed a communication to the English Government which showed that he had a bizarre dream of furnishing livestock from Venezuela to the English West Indies and thereby promoting a revolution.²⁷ On July 18, 1803, he addressed a note to Vansittart

²⁶ Wright, *Works of James Gillray*, p. 296.

²⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

proposing an adjustment of his financial relations with the English Government in order that he might be able to depart for his native land. He expressed his willingness to renounce his allowance of five hundred pounds per annum in return for a payment of fifteen hundred pounds that was to be viewed as a loan. But he asked that the government should continue "for some time the extraordinary gratification," apparently amounting to two hundred pounds a year, which he had been receiving to cover the expenses of his house in London. He explained his motives in these words:

"The object of this proposition is to offer to my country in the last act of my devotion all that I possess, as I am thoroughly convinced that a cause more just, more important, more honorable, and more interesting to humanity has never been presented to mortal beings. Not having received a definite decision about my notes of May 17 and July 12, I should like to believe that this is not due to a lack of consideration and good will on the part of His Majesty's ministers. It would be inexplicable if a nation so powerful and so rich as England, that finds herself directly or indirectly involved in a war with Spain and her Allies, a nation that ought indubitably to be the chief and the first power to gather the expected fruits of this emancipation, would not desire to promote it by a pound, a musket, a soldier, or a vessel!" ²⁸

Five days later Miranda supplemented this by another letter addressed to Vansittart but intended for Addington. He pointed out that Spain's failure to take measures for the safety of her colonies during the peace, the weak garrisons in certain French colonies in America, and the cession of Louisiana to the United States by France made this juncture most favorable for the execution of his enterprise. All of these advantages, however, would be lost by postponement: "I prefer the least favorable decision," he concluded, "to the most plausible and advantageous of delays." ²⁹ On July 29 Miranda was informed by Vansittart that the ministers were occupied with

²⁸ Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Irish affairs, and that to his latest propositions Addington had not made any definite response.³⁰

Through letters from Vargas, Miranda was confirmed in the belief that conditions in the province of Caracas were ripe for rebellion. In one letter that compatriot reported that there had been fresh manifestations of discontent with Spanish rule in Venezuela and that the people of Coro were most disposed to revolt. "I have already told you," continued Vargas, "that there are persons here who would sacrifice their lives and their property for this great cause and that similar sentiments are entertained in all the Spanish-American colonies." Of Gual's former associates, he said: "I have told them that you have not forgotten your native land; this assurance filled them with enthusiasm." He assured Miranda that he would leave nothing undone at Trinidad to promote the success of the great plan: "Do not forget," he added, "that you were born in America and that she calls you with open arms."³¹ In another letter, after describing Picton's hostile attitude toward their plans, Vargas reiterated his views:

"Nevertheless, I have told you that the province of Caracas is favorably disposed to revolt, that the militiamen are our partisans, that the regular soldiers there aggregate only six hundred veterans who are scattered throughout the garrisons of the province, that there are no fortifications at the capital city, that the Spaniards are constantly trembling for fear of an insurrection, that Coro is the place where the largest number of friends of liberty reside, and that in consequence Curaçao would be an interesting point."³²

In August, 1803, Miranda was informed by Christopher Gore, an American friend who was now in London, that a supply of muskets could be secured on short notice from Boston and New York.³³ Disgusted at the delays by England, the South American sent a letter to Rufus King declaring that to him the conduct of that government appeared suspicious, if

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ June 25, 1803, *ibid.*

³² June 27, 1803, *ibid.*

³³ Gore to Miranda, Aug. 22, 1803, *ibid.*

not perfidious. About the middle of August tentative preparations were apparently made for his departure from London. His proposal was that, upon being paid the amount of money which would have accrued from his annual allowance of five hundred pounds in from three to five years, he was to renounce it forever. At Trinidad he hoped to find two vessels from the United States bearing arms and munitions. He appealed to King for coöperation and forwarded an estimate of the cost of furnishing five thousand men and supplies for one year.³⁴ Meantime in letters to Vargas, Miranda expressed hope that in some manner or other he would soon be able to join him. On August 18 he warned that compatriot to beware of Spanish partisans who would, if possible, sell the friends of independence to the devil himself.³⁵ On September 10 he wrote again to state that he had just seen Vansittart and Nepean; he added in a hopeful vein :

“Although there is no decision whether or not we shall have succor immediately, yet we have decided that I shall have passage with my suite for Trinidad in a frigate within twenty or thirty days at the latest. During this interval it is very likely that war will be declared against Spain and then we shall get everything; but, if this does not happen, then we shall commence the task ourselves with the forces which we can gather in the island and those which come from New York. The moment is so favorable that it would be unfortunate to lose the chance in order to wait upon those persons who desire only to sacrifice us for the last time. I have written to Mr. King at New York and asked that without delay he should send to us at Trinidad two American vessels with four thousand muskets and munitions and at least two hundred brave Americans.”³⁶

However, Miranda was again induced to linger in the English metropolis. The prospect of war with France and Spain soon inclined certain Englishmen to hearken to him. One

³⁴ King, *Life and Correspondence*, IV, 298, 299, 517-18.

³⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Colonel Fullarton, who had long been interested in the Spanish Indies, was consulted about Miranda's plans. A prosperous and enterprising government contractor named Alexander Davison became a convert to the cause of Spanish-American emancipation. Actively did he coöperate in tentative preparations for an attack on South America. He offered to furnish three or four vessels for the expedition, if the English ministers would agree to equip a ship of war and to recompense him in case the attack should fail. As a remuneration in case it should succeed, Miranda apparently promised Davison commercial advantages in the liberated colonies.

"August 1, 1803, this letter was given to me by Sir Home Popham today. He expressed a desire to serve with me in whatsoever expedition may be formed to establish the independence of South America."⁸⁷ This note, penned by Miranda in Spanish on the margin of an undated letter, marks the beginning of his friendship with a naval captain whose conduct was being investigated because of alleged unjustifiable expenditures in repairing his ship, the *Romney*, at Calcutta. In an undated epistle to Miranda that officer wrote: "I wish ministers would see your Plan in so essential a point of view as they ought; I long to be in a state of intimate action with you, on this subject."⁸⁸

In November, 1803, in a memorial addressed to Charles Yorke, who had become secretary of state for home affairs, Captain Popham elaborated a plan for an attack on the Spanish Indies. Popham declared that Miranda desired a regiment of infantry, two companies of artillery, and two squadrons of dismounted cavalrymen. Soldiers led by him were to proceed against Venezuela; thence they were to invade New Granada, and eventually the Presidency of Quito. A fortified post was to be established on the Isthmus of Panama where the promoter planned to communicate with the forces that were to be sent from India to the Pacific Ocean. On his part the naval officer urged English ministers also to send an ex-

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

pedition against the Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires.³⁹ Not only did Popham consult with Miranda but he also attended conferences with members of the cabinet about an attack on South America.⁴⁰ The project undoubtedly also came to the attention of Sir Evan Nepean.

Miranda seems to have considered the outlook promising; at least he wished to be prepared for any contingency. On November 12, 1803, he drew up some rough estimates for the attack that was being contemplated against the Spanish Indies. His project involved the employment for twelve months of an Indiaman of some thirteen hundred tons burden and of six small armed vessels. Infantry, artillery, and cavalry commanded by English officers were to be furnished by the government and placed on board the armed vessels. It was also to provide funds for the purchase and provisioning of the ships. Certain English merchants, however, were to assume a considerable share of the expense. Miranda declared that, if this project were approved by the Prime Minister, he could name the merchants who would thus coöperate and the officers who should supervise the equipment of the expedition.⁴¹ Meantime he was receiving encouragement from a new partisan in Trinidad. Juan M. Rico, an expatriated Venezuelan who had been implicated in Gual's conspiracy, wrote to the promoter and expressed his enthusiasm for the cause of Spanish-American independence. In the words of a sympathizer he declared that the "general happiness" of Venezuela depended upon Miranda.⁴²

In the end of 1803 he again held conferences with English ministers. Among his papers is a letter of December 7 which, unlike many others, was written in English and in the third person: "General Miranda presents his Compliments to the Earl of St. Vincent and as he understands that the affairs of Spain are drawing to that period when the benevolent plan of

³⁹ Castlereagh, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, VII, 290-92.

⁴⁰ *Minutes of a Court Martial*, pp. 78, 79.

⁴¹ "No. 6. A Rough Estimate for the Expedition in Question," Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

⁴² Oct. 12, 1803, *ibid.*

South America, in which Ld. St. Vincent formerly took so warm an Interest, may be brought forward,—he requests Lord St. Vincent will give him the Honor of an Audience next Sunday which he supposes will perhaps be a leisure day to his Lordship.”⁴³ Through Secretary Vansittart, who continued to act as an intermediary, on December 10 Miranda was invited to dine at the residence of Charles Yorke who had become home secretary. On the back of the card asking him to dinner Miranda inscribed this instructive comment:

“This invitation was given because of a long conference which that Minister, Popham, and I had held three days earlier. During that conference the affair was treated very earnestly. It was even suggested that there was a necessity that I should accept the commission of a British lieutenant general with a command over the coasts of South America in order that no difficulty might arise with English soldiers during the expedition. This was suggested to me by Sullivan and Vansittart whom I saw on December 10. Only five of us met at this dinner. Yorke was remarkably attentive and friendly to me. We conversed much about expeditions to South America. To me all the world seemed well disposed and in a mind to carry out such an enterprise with the exception of Sullivan, who appeared to me to be a man of duplicity and limited ability. Ultimately Vansittart set a date upon which we should all gather at his house with Sir Evan Nepean. I was asked to return with certain maps of America and to bring Vargas with me. It did not appear to me that the Minister was animated by his earlier fervor.”⁴⁴

At this juncture Davison became anxious. He informed Popham that an order ought to be given for the saddles which were required for the enterprise.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, early in 1804 English statesmen were still meditating about the policy to be pursued toward the Spanish Indies. On January 4 Miranda wrote to Secretary Vansittart to urge immediate action. He declared that otherwise the Spanish Americans would con-

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Undated, Popham to Miranda, *ibid.*

sider him as an incapable person and a perfidious friend. Merchants in London, he declared, were ready to furnish arms, ships, and the funds necessary to carry out his enterprise, if the English Government did not desire to participate. He maintained that at least it should not oppose his project. Two days later he sent Popham extracts from letters which he had received from Spanish America in order that they might be submitted to Secretary Yorke and thus encourage an early decision. France, he averred, was a menace to Spanish-American independence, and the "Colombians" were impatient at the delay.⁴⁶ But Vansittart soon informed him that while England was at peace with Spain she would not be disposed to favor any design which would furnish a basis for the slightest imputation on her good faith.⁴⁷

Popham then wrote Miranda that he had been very busy "on the subject of our wishes, a seat" in the House of Commons, so that he might become "the agent in Parliament of South America." He expressed the opinion that he would be elected a member of Parliament. "When we are in Columbia," predicted the aspiring naval officer, "the Senate shall pay for all our Speculations."⁴⁸ In an undated epistle, which displays Popham's keen interest in the revolutionizing of Spanish America, this officer stated that he had "just seen Davison, and entered very fully into all our Conversation of yesterday; he thinks from something that has transpired that your wishes are by no means abandoned, as no permission has yet been granted to give over the arms which he has prepared to another Department." Popham then added: "He assured me that with every Inclination to manifest his sincere desire of serving you, he does not think the Privy Council would give him leave to embark so many Arms, and warlike Stores. I question it myself, but I think it ought to be a measure of the Secret and Confidential Department and when I can secure this damn'd Seat, I shall then be able to have a freer intercourse and push it with more weight."⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* ⁴⁷ Vansittart to Miranda, Jan. 6, 1804, *ibid.* ⁴⁸ Undated, *ibid.* ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

In another undated letter Popham reluctantly admitted:

"I really have not had resolution to call on you, as I cannot yet obtain from Lord M. any fixed appointment to see you, he is so overwhelmed with business that except to his immediate department he has not yet a moment to dispose of; I saw Davison who tells me he is pressing Sir Evan to interest himself to bring everything to an immediate Issue. I shall never lose sight of this great object, and will not fail to take every opportunity of urging its Consequence and urging an Interview with you as soon as can possibly be obtained."⁵⁰

On March 12, 1804, Miranda felt that the time for action was close at hand. He wrote a sanguine letter to Vansittart stating that Under Secretary Cooke was now convinced of the accuracy of his calculations in regard to a South American expedition. Further, an assurance had reached him from Lord Melville that everything was ready for action "according to the preconcerted plan."⁵¹ During this month a schedule of articles was prepared which were to be furnished by Davison. This list included a printing press, five thousand jackets, and ten thousand shirts.⁵² To the memorandum preserved in Miranda's papers which bears the endorsement "ordered by Mr. V.—," there is annexed a list of articles requested by General Miranda. That list included twenty-five tons of pig lead, one hundred barrels of gunpowder, three hundred muskets, three thousand pikes, and a vessel of some three hundred tons completely armed and equipped.⁵³ Despite reports of Spain's neutrality, on March 31 Miranda had decided that in consequence of an agreement with Vansittart he ought to leave England near the end of the next month.⁵⁴

Passages from a letter written by Davison to Miranda will indicate how the enterprise stood on April 2, 1804:

"I have received intimations from the person I employ that

⁵⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 49. ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 47.

⁵² "Articles forthwith to be provided by Mr. Davison," *ibid.*, vol. 48.

⁵³ "Added by General Miranda," March 20, 1804, *ibid.*

⁵⁴ Miranda to Vansittart, March 31, 1804, *ibid.*

he has a Ship in view that he conceives will exactly answer the purpose, *and that she will be ready in the course of a few days for Inspection*. I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. V—— on Wednesday, *who gave me verbally the necessary instructions to proceed with everything excepting the Arms, Pikes and Gunpowder*. However these articles, I can have no great difficulty in procuring, should he at any time approve the purchase of them. *He appeared most ready to promote the plan*, and from what I could learn from him, it will not be his fault, if the Object be not carried *into the full Extent of Your Wishes*. He is a pleasant gentlemanlike man, *and possesses the strictest principles of Honor*. I pin great faith on what he says.—I wish you would see Sir Home Popham and ask him if he knows of a clever fellow that would on Friday next go and take a look at the Ship I have in view to purchase, as I would wish to consult a professional man, tho' I am myself a tolerable good judge of Ships, yet upon such an occasion as the one in question it would be a very great satisfaction to me to have my opinion sanctioned by that of a Naval Character.—I shall be at Home on Thursday by noon.—my absences do not prevent the supplies being provided, as I have issued all the requisite orders for them agreeably to Mr. V's instructions.

"The Ship reported to me *is about 300 Tons pierced for 20 Guns and calculated to carry 140 men and is coppered*. * * * As it is a matter that *must* positively be kept a profound secret, and every deception used to prevent its being made public at least two months to come, I have made my Broker believe that the purpose I want the Ship is to send her out as a Privateer. * * *

On April 3, 1804, Miranda wrote to Christopher Gore at Boston in enthusiastic terms:

"The affair progresses here without change or delay conformably to the arrangement of which I informed you before your departure. My departure is irrevocably fixed for the approaching first of May; the ship is purchased; and its armament will be completed in eight days. Thus all that which I

⁵⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

earnestly demanded of you should be provided before my arrival at Trinidad, which will be in the middle of June next, that is to say, powder and four thousand muskets for use in war. The remainder may be sent at your leisure; but those articles must be at Trinidad at the above-mentioned time because they are indispensable in my calculations. I rely absolutely upon your zeal and good friendship; and I say further that the English Government is enchanted with this coöperation. * * * The color of the uniform is blue and yellow. *Audentes Fortuna Juvat.*" ⁵⁶

Yet Miranda's high expectations were to remain unfulfilled. As no decisive rupture took place between England and Spain, the ancient ally of France essaying a neutral rôle, the peace-loving Addington directed that an order should be issued to Davison directing that measures preparatory to a South American expedition should cease.⁵⁷ Still hoping, on April 6 Miranda informed Vansittart that he had just seen Davison and Popham on "the affair in question," that the armament of the vessel was almost completed, and that all the supplies would be embarked within eight days. He asked to see Vansittart in order that he might be able to write definitely to his correspondents in America by the next mail. "I shall accordingly go to see you at the accustomed hour," said the promoter, "unless you advise me to the contrary." ⁵⁸ However, on April 7 Miranda received an intimation that his plans were again frustrated; for he inscribed that date on a "secret" letter received from Secretary Vansittart which ran as follows:

"I am much embarrassed because of a circumstance which should cause you, as well as me, the greatest regret. I have been prohibited from taking the least part even indirectly in the affair. This in truth causes me to reflect as to how I can avoid inconveniencing you. Perhaps it will be necessary for you to refrain from further communications to me. At least a

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 49.

⁵⁷ Vansittart to Miranda, March 12 and 19, 1804, *ibid.*, vol. 48. ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

little time is needed to think this over.”⁵⁹ Three days later Miranda penned his reply:

“Your note of the seventh of this month, my dear Sir, has certainly pained and surprised me. It has affected me more than it otherwise would have done because it did not state any motive which would justify such behaviour and because not a single step has been taken in this delicate affair without previous consultation with you or at least without your consent. Nevertheless, as I love to view the attitude of my friends and of honest men in as favorable a light as possible, and as you said, ‘That a little time is needed to think this over,’ I shall transmit my sentiments upon this singular transaction on a more favorable or opportune occasion.

“Moreover at the present moment the engagements that I have contracted in virtue of my later agreements with the government of this country bear solely upon me. It is necessary that I strive to acquit myself of them in an honorable manner and thus demonstrate my good faith and the rectitude of my intentions toward those persons who might suffer by a change in policy. Solely for this purpose and to adjust the definitive arrangements of my personal and pecuniary affairs, I demand an interview of you at a convenient time and place. As good faith and exactness in transactions are the only things which can guarantee a man any repose or satisfaction in life, I beseech you to excuse this importunity; and I frankly avow to you that as the reputation of being an honest man is in my opinion the most honorable title which one can possess, it is the only title that persons ambitious to get power will some day merit.”⁶⁰

When Davison learned of this fiasco he was much provoked. In a confidential epistle dated April 10 he stated that he had conversed with Vansittart and that the Secretary was “sincerely distressed” about the failure to execute the revolutionary design. “I am quite satisfied in my own mind,” said Davison, “that it is not owing to Himself that the Service has not been carried into effect. He expressed much concern on your account and I am sure that he is sincere.”⁶¹

⁵⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

While Addington was premier the mood of Miranda was thus marked by alternating hopes and fears. Possibly it was at this time that his annual allowance was increased two hundred pounds a year. In addition some measures were presumably taken to relieve him from the financial embarrassment due to the preparations that the English Government had sanctioned for a South American expedition. In any case there is no doubt that in the spring of 1804 he became aware that the formation of a new cabinet was imminent. For, in the belief that Lord St. Vincent was neglecting the national defense, on March 15, 1804, Pitt had introduced a motion into Parliament that an inquiry should be made into the condition of the navy. He urged that in addition to the floating castles which protected England there should be prepared for the defense of her coast an adequate mosquito fleet. In a speech in Parliament on April 23 Pitt declared that the French had assembled some thirteen hundred transport vessels within sight of English shores. In the face of such criticisms the government's majority dwindled. Largely because of the apprehensions of those Englishmen who dreaded an invasion launched from the cliffs of Boulogne, on May 10, 1804, the Prime Minister gave up the seals of office.

Chapter XIII

LAST TRANSACTIONS WITH PITT

ON MAY 7, 1804, William Pitt proceeded to Buckingham Palace to confer with George III. He found the King resolved to oppose the inclusion in the projected ministry of Charles James Fox, and soon discovered that in consequence Lord Grenville would not join him. Six members of Pitt's new ministry had been in Addington's cabinet. Among these were Lord Hawkesbury, who now became home secretary, the Duke of Portland, who became Lord President of the Privy Council, and Viscount Castlereagh, who became president of the India board. Lord Harrowby was made secretary of state for foreign affairs. The management of colonial affairs was now transferred from the home office to the war office; Earl Camden became secretary of state for war and the colonies. Henry Dundas, who had been created Viscount Melville, was appointed first lord of the admiralty. In this very month Gillray drew a spirited cartoon entitled "Britannia between Death and the Doctors" which portrayed Pitt, the chief physician, executing a war dance beside the sick lady, while, on the other hand, she was being threatened by a spear brandished by Napoleon who represented Death.

Scarcely had Pitt's ministry been formed, when Popham incited Miranda in this wise: "I wrote a short memorandum for you, which Lady P. copied last night. I think you ought to say so much, more if you like it, and alter it to your own fancy, but it should be ready against the New Ministry is appointed. Nobody has any nomination yet but Mr. Pitt."¹ On May 15, three days after Pitt again became premier, Miranda addressed a letter marked private to Viscount Melville. He declared that he was to an extent justified for intruding so early upon the new ministry because of the peculiar condition of his country, because of the influence which Napoleon

¹ "Friday," *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 49.

possessed with the court of Madrid, and because of the danger that he might extend his designs to the Spanish Indies. He expressed serious apprehensions that the French might suddenly seize the ports of Venezuela and New Granada. He declared that steps preparatory for a South American expedition had been taken in Trinidad, New York, and London. Anxiously did he solicit from the new cabinet "a final resolution" on the subject. In the third person he described the fluctuations in English policy.

"The Merchant who had prepared all the Articles necessary, under the orders of Mr. N. Vansittart who was deputed by Mr. Addington to confer on all occasions with the undersigned, and who absolutely received an order from Mr. Vansittart to purchase and arm a ship for the Conveyance of these articles, received very suddenly on the 7th of last month an order to suspend every preparation and expence which he had been previously directed to undertake.—Mr. Vansittart however in the last conference he had with the undersigned on the 3d of the present month pressed on him the importance and necessity of submitting himself on the earliest occasion to the notice of the new administration; and he trusts he shall be allowed the first vacant moment to lay before them his military Plans and his Correspondence with the agents of his secret American Friends and Others who are now residing at Trinidad, where the undersigned wishes to repair without any loss of time to open a more direct Intercourse with the settlement at Guira opposite to Trinidad where he conceives there is a very formidable Party already established, and which may pave the way for the accomplishment of all his views in the River Oronoque etc, . . . and this will open such a channel for exporting the manufacturers of Great Britain, and returning a very valuable Trade to this Country. The undersigned scarce thinks it necessary to trouble His Majesty's government more in detail at this moment, further than to observe that he considers he shall be able to make a considerable progress from Trinidad before even War (which in his mind appears inevitable, should take place with Spain); provided the Governor of Trinidad is a Person of some political knowledge

and a general conciliatory disposition.”²

On May 16 Miranda addressed a letter marked “secret” to the new Prime Minister. He expressed the hope that either he would be accorded an interview with that Minister in place of Vansittart who had gone out of office, or that another government official would be deputed to deal with him upon the delicate and important topic of Spanish-American liberation. “The military plans,” continued Miranda, “as well as the correspondence with agents of Spanish America, and the actual state of the preparations, will be made known to the person designated for that purpose. I hope that after this examination the new ministers of His Majesty will consent that the project shall be continued, especially as all the expenses and preparations have already been made, and as they will be able to decide whether or not to initiate the enterprise and whether or not they wish to take part in it, as they may judge convenient.”³ Popham had also approached the cabinet. On May 18 he sent word of his proceedings to Miranda: “I had some conversation yesterday with Lord Melville, who takes up the thing very warmly; he has just begun in Office which is in such confusion that it will be some days before he sees his way clear,—he will certainly give you an audience next Week.”⁴

Meantime, believing that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, Davison had retained some articles which had been prepared for the expedition under the previous ministry. On June 7, 1804, he wrote to Miranda to express regret that he had neither heard anything from Sir Evan Nepean, who had been appointed secretary for Ireland, nor had he received “any further information on the subject which ought long ago to have been finally determined upon by Government. If I do not hear something in the course of today,” he continued, “I shall be obliged, tho’ however reluctantly, to assign over the articles to the Transport Board.—I am sorry I can give no interesting intimation whatever.” In conclusion he reported

² Ch. MSS., bundle 160.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 48.



Lord Melville. Painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P. R. A., in the National Gallery, London. From a mezzotint by E. McInnes. In the collection of the British Museum.

that "Sir Home Popham took a late dinner with me yesterday, but could say nothing farther on the Grand Object."⁵

The negotiations,—if such they may be designated,—again proceeded too slowly to suit Miranda's taste. On June 12, 1804, he committed his thoughts to a memorandum. He wrote that, as the tentative measures undertaken by the English Government had been made known to Spanish-American "agents" at Trinidad and New York, he feared that, if he did not promptly appear in the New World, a premature and mis-directed uprising might occur in South America. He stated that interested parties in England and the United States had promised him ample supplies of arms and munitions. In regard to coöperation from the English Government, he declared that this had best be done under the direction of "Sir Home Popham, the officer who under the sanction of the recent ministry helped to make the naval preparations; for I am persuaded that he combines with military and political knowledge a zeal and devotion for the success of this enterprise which it would be difficult to find combined in any other person." The promoter expressed the opinion that he should be allowed to depart for America as soon as possible, and that before sailing he should be permitted to make arrangements for a "general plan of operations against the entire Spanish-American Continent and in the Pacific Ocean." He mentioned with approval the projects for the government of independent Spanish America that he had framed in May, 1801. He recorded that his plan for an attack on Caracas at that time had been modified in view of information recently received from South America. Of this Sir Evan Nepean had been duly informed in order that he might transmit the news to the cabinet.⁶

In a supplementary memorandum dated August 3, 1804, Miranda made a fresh argument for immediate action by England.⁷ He sent copies of these memoranda with illustrative doc-

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 49. ⁶ "Private Memorandum," June 12, 1804, *ibid.*

⁷ "Addition," *ibid.*

uments to Captain Popham so that they might be transmitted to Evan Nepean. Two days later Popham acknowledged the receipt of Miranda's letter with its enclosures. He reported that he had transmitted them to Nepean, and as he said he would endeavor "to arrange all points before he went to Ireland," continued the captain, "I am inclined to think much better of the chance of its being put into execution." Further, Nepean had promised to send to Miranda for such letters "as he wanted for Mr. Pitt's Information; I also spoke to Lord Melville on the Subject, and you may rely on it, that independent of my sincere regard for you, I see the thing has so many national advantages, that I feel it a Duty to advance it with all my weight, which God knows is but very little. You may however rely upon it that I shall lose no opportunity to press it to an issue; but Sir Evan is the person on whom you must place all your dependance, and I advise you by all means to see him the moment he returns from Bridhat." The impatient temper of the revolutionary agitator is mirrored in the concluding phrase in which Popham assured Miranda that "the moment I hear anything I will inform you, and I beg you will always command me when you have occasion only don't be in a passion."⁸

His other coöperator, Davison, also held out encouragement, for he wrote to Miranda on August 6, that everything was "in a train of being brought to a decision without farther delay." Davison added that he had given Sir Evan Nepean "a list of additional articles" that he thought Miranda should have and which Nepean approved. "He told me you were to be with him yesterday and afterwards he was to be with the ministers so that I flatter myself the matter is finally adjusted and fixed."⁹ Fifteen days later Miranda sent a plea to Secretary Nepean. "You say in your letter to Davison," wrote the promoter, "that you find it impossible to prevail on a certain person to allow our friend to embark immediately, the reasons

⁸ Mir. MSS., vol. 49.

⁹ *Ibid.*

for objecting to it at the present moment are obvious." He then explained that he did not complain of him on that score but rather because of his precipitate departure for Ireland without returning some "sacred documents" which had been confided to his care, the loss of which would be "irreparable."¹⁰

The status which these negotiations soon assumed and the intimate relations that had developed between Miranda and his chief supporter can best be indicated by quoting an epistle which Vansittart wrote to the general on September 20, 1804:

"I received your letter of yesterday with true satisfaction. I expect that our government, eventually finding itself deceived about the views of the court of Madrid, will put more energy into those measures which affairs have thus far allowed to suffer because of procrastination and indecision. That which appears to me most urgent is to send orders by land to the governor general of the Indies to prepare a corps of six thousand Indian troops for a distant expedition and to prepare a reserve of equal size to follow those troops some months later. If you do not have an occasion to see Lord Melville, you can suggest this idea through Popham. It is essential that no time shall be lost in dispatching a squadron for the South Sea before the season is too far advanced for the ships to round Cape Horn. The knowledge as well as the zeal of Nepean would be infinitely useful, but I fear that he will not be able to leave Ireland until he is replaced. I shall be in the city on Wednesday as I had planned; I recommend, above all, that you should meditate about the organization of the country after its liberation."¹¹

As he evidently believed that hostilities would soon break out between England and Spain and as he wished to secure the markets of South America for English merchants, the first Lord of the Admiralty meantime undertook to become fully acquainted with Miranda's projects through Nepean, Popham, and other persons. In September, 1804, a merchant

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

named George Fitzwilliam who had arrived from Trinidad displayed much interest in the fate of the Spanish Indies. At Miranda's suggestion Fitzwilliam called on Lord Melville at Wimbledon and informed him of the discontent in northern South America at Spanish rule; he declared that thousands of Spanish Americans were galled with the yoke of their government and would flock to the banner of freedom and independence. Fitzwilliam apparently hinted that attempts were being made to form a liaison between Venezuela and the French Government of Santo Domingo. He told Miranda that he had declared to Melville that procrastination in the revolutionizing of Spanish America "created difficulties, and might prove fatal—But no doubt of Success could be entertained, if a force Sufficient to inspire confidence were immediately sent." The merchant reported that the Minister seemed "to be impressed with the importance of the Subject and with the Idea of a Prompt execution." Evidently Melville expressed the hope that Miranda "would not require a large Force" and sent word that "he intended to bring the business forward the first thing when he came to town."¹²

It is likely that a knowledge of this interview stimulated Miranda to urge his views again. He was also egged on by a letter from Home Popham at Dover whose conduct was being investigated by a select committee of the House of Commons, and who had been recently placed in command of the gunship *Antelope* on the Downs station:

"I came up here for a few hours and I find a Letter from Lord Melville on business of the most pleasant nature, it will do, he says he shall soon send for me.—Now my honest fellow, in a few words you must write to Lord Melville, tho the first thing you are to do is to send for a chaise to go to Wimbledon, call first at the Admiralty to see if he is in Town, if not drive there—while the chaise is getting ready, write a few lines which you can leave at Wimbledon if he is not at home, but try to see him. Let your Letter say, that as Mr. Frere has asked

¹² Fitzwilliam to Miranda, Sept. 24, 1804, Mir. MSS., vol. 49

his Passports there is now not an hour to be lost, and you hope he will send a Messenger after Sir Home Popham without delay to come to Town to make the whole of the preparation in this affair, and if his Lordship means his present Ship to go that he will let it come to Spithead to be ready to receive you.—This is the substance—put it in your language.—write to me at Dungeness, Kent, where I shall be tomorrow.”¹³

In a letter addressed to Melville on September 27, 1804, Miranda stated that he and Davison had agreed “that all the articles purchased already on account of Government and those lately added by Sir Evan Nepean for *the same purpose*” should be made ready within a fortnight. The revolutionary now avowed that the aid which he desired was a regiment of infantry, a company of artillery, and a company of light cavalry. He declared that this force would appear “preposterous” but for the fact that the invaders would meet not enemies but friends. The only real difficulties that he apprehended would be either from delay or from intervention by other people than the English. “I hope,” added Miranda, “that Providence, and your Lordship’s Wisdom will avert the mischief.”¹⁴

He soon renewed his representations to Pitt. In a letter dated September 29, 1804, he expressed the opinion that the time had arrived when he “ought to claim” Pitt’s “sacred promise” to aid Spanish America in case of a war between England and Spain. Miranda alleged that the results of certain negotiations at Madrid had become known to the Prime Minister and requested permission to proceed to Trinidad where compatriots awaited him. He said that Fitzwilliam had declared that emissaries from Venezuela had recently passed through Trinidad bound for Santo Domingo where they intended to solicit aid in the establishment of their independence. He hoped that Pitt’s patriotism and wisdom would avert the calamities which would flow from concerted action between the French and the Spanish Americans. Lord Melville, he declared, had memoranda of the forces and supplies which were

¹³ “Dover 23d,” *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

considered necessary for an expedition to South America.¹⁵

Events meantime transpired that made English ministers look with increasing favor on Miranda's plans. Hookham Frere, the English ambassador to Madrid, arrived in London on September 17. His reports conveyed the impression that Spain was arming against England. Upon being informed that the Spanish fleet was about to join the French fleet, Pitt resolved to warn Spain of the danger involved in her hostile conduct. On September 18 the cabinet decided to direct Admiral Cochrane to blockade Ferrol, to order Admiral Cornwallis, who was blockading Brest, to join Cochrane, and thus to insure the capture of galleons that were on the high seas en route to Cadiz. On October 5 English frigates accordingly intercepted four Spanish corvettes that were transporting specie from South America to Spain, and, after a short conflict in which one ship blew up, the treasure fleet surrendered.¹⁶ In the meantime Miranda had ordered Faden to make some careful maps of South America.¹⁷

Under date of October 13, 1804, Miranda's instructive account of his relations with Melville and Popham runs in these words:

"This forenoon I was at Popham's residence. He told me that he dined yesterday with Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville at Wimbledon for the purpose of discussing my plans about the independence of South America. He said that in truth they had discussed nothing else and that the ministers seemed to display a very favorable attitude toward the affair, especially Mr. Pitt, and that the bases, principles, and means which I proposed were acceptable. Further, he reported that Pitt concluded by saying: 'Suppose that you should be governor of Trinidad and that we should not have war with Spain, how could you restrain Miranda from crossing the narrow strait of Pária to the Continent and doing that which he has so long premeditated? Animated by elevated thoughts and by the noble ambition of becoming the liberator and the legislator

¹⁵ Ch. MSS., bundle 160.

¹⁶ *Annual Register*, 1804, pp. 555-56.

¹⁷ Faden to Miranda, Aug. 23, Oct. 15, 1804, Mir. MSS., vol. 24.

of his native land, he would wish to play in the most sublime manner the rôle that Washington played in North America.' To this my friend responded 'that I would not undertake anything which was not agreed upon here, and that he knew enough to assure Pitt that whatever I might promise on my word of honor I would not break for all the world.' Thus the discussion ended, the agreement being reached that Popham and I should formally draw up the aforesaid plans, should do them into English, and proceed together on Tuesday the 16th at 9 A.M. to the house of Lord Melville at Wimbledon. With maps and plans at hand they would then investigate the affair in detail and make a definitive decision."¹⁸

According to Miranda's memorandum, after conferring with Davison, he proceeded to Popham's country house. With maps, books, and papers brought from London he and Popham set to work. Aided by a secretary, they soon completed a memoir which was signed by Popham and dated October 14, 1804. That document outlined a fresh plan for an attack on the Spanish Indies. Sanguine hope was expressed in this project of coöperation in the revolutionizing of Spanish America by the inhabitants of New Granada and Venezuela. Expectations were also entertained of aid from friends at Trinidad, which was to be employed as a base of operations against the adjacent Continent. For the campaign in Venezuela the South American desired two thousand infantry, two corps of dismounted cavalry, and two companies of artillery from seasoned troops in the West Indies. These forces were to be accompanied by an English squadron that should include a sloop of war and a frigate. Once master of his native province, Miranda evidently believed that he could raise there some twenty thousand recruits and that his liberating army would be increased as he marched through New Granada toward the Isthmus of Panama.

A feature of this plan in which Popham was particularly interested was an expedition of some three thousand soldiers

¹⁸ "Conferencias con los Ministros de S. Mag. Brit.," Oct. 13, 1804, *ibid.*

against the Viceroyalty of La Plata. He also proposed that sepoys from India, aided perhaps by recruits from Australia, should proceed to Valparaiso, Lima, and Panama. With the governor of Trinidad acting as the commander of the naval squadron, with Miranda directing the land forces against northern South America, and himself in charge of the expedition against Buenos Aires, the naval officer evidently thought that the chief strategic positions in South America would be captured. Thus that Continent could be separated from Spain. Such a policy would promote the destruction of the Spanish navy and greatly reduce the revenue of France. England's income and importance would be correspondingly increased.

In an undated letter to Lord Melville the naval officer thus explained his intentions in framing the memoir: "As I thought your Lordship would like to be prepared on every point, for your conversation with General Miranda tomorrow at breakfast; I have taken his opinion on several heads, which has enabled me to write the accompanying Paper; I will bring out the Charts necessary to satisfy you geographically, and the General will in course enter upon any detail respecting himself, or make any objections to what I have proposed if they should occur to him."¹⁹

Let us now read Miranda's account of his reception by Lord Melville:

"He received me very graciously saying that, if Spain would furnish a favorable opportunity for war, he would be much pleased. Then we proceeded to eat breakfast while talking about the project in general terms. We discussed the information that Mr. Fitzwilliam had brought about Trinidad and the Venezuelan coast as well as the risk that the colored people of Spanish Santo Domingo might combine with those of Venezuela and New Granada. At this we completed our breakfast, the table was cleared, and the maps were unrolled so that Lord Melville might observe with these at his elbow

¹⁹ Mel. MSS., f. 78. See further *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VI, 513-17; *Minutes of a Court Martial*, 79. A copy of Popham's memoir of Oct. 14 is found in Mir. MSS., vol. 48.

what our memoir contained. He passed over the persuasive and argumentative part of the paper, assuring us that this was not necessary, for he had been a complete convert for more than five years. We began with the island of Trinidad, the Orinoco River, and the Venezuelan coast as far as Maracaibo, all of which appeared satisfactory to him.

“But at this point Popham, who thought like an Englishman, intruded a strange idea by proposing that the port of La Guaira ought to remain in the possession of England as a key to commerce and in order that it might not pass into other hands. I responded to this strange idea by declaring that not only would this measure be inconsistent with Venezuelan independence and alarming to all the world but that the inhabitants of the country would desert La Guaira. Further, I maintained that other ports would at once be opened where people would be treated with freedom and consideration, while the English would be viewed with suspicion. Lord Melville accepted my views and agreed that to leave this port in the hands of the Spanish Americans would be the best policy and indeed the only policy which would gain their confidence.

“Next we considered Santa Marta, Chagres, Panama, the Magdalena River, and Cartagena. It appeared proper to Lord Melville that the squadron which was to act in concert with the continental army should proceed along the coast at the same time that the army, progressively increased by the inhabitants of the country, equipped itself with the military supplies and munitions conveyed by the squadron and took possession of those posts and ports that were located along the coast and the rivers. In that manner England would be able to furnish arms and munitions for the soldiers of the country and to support them with her fleet. This assistance is the only and indeed the easiest coöperation that England can furnish for the independence of Spanish America. ‘You would give for this service,’ he said to me, ‘a corresponding donation.’ ‘For the soldiers and the squadron,’ I responded; ‘and to pay the cost of the armament,’ added my Lord. ‘In the most liberal manner,’ said I. To which he agreed, saying ‘very well.’ He

also said 'that with regard to land forces England would scarcely be able to furnish any because the difficulty of raising soldiers here was almost incredible.' To this I replied 'that the colored regiments actually found in the West Indies would perhaps be more useful to us at the start.' He agreed with me that in those climates colored soldiers were better, and that their fidelity and valor had been shown in the last war."

Miranda's account continues that they next considered operations against the Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires. He apparently expressed the opinion that an English garrison should be stationed there to guard the ports of Maldonado and Montevideo. "Then," added Miranda, "we proceeded to consider the South Sea. I explained how native soldiers from Botany Bay might coöperate usefully for the same object in Chile by acting against the small Spanish squadron which should be in that sea.

"All this seemed to go very well. He observed that although the plan was vast and apparently complicated, yet, in his opinion, there was nothing in it which was not practical and sensible in relation to the whole. I mentioned to him with what I considered the requisite delicacy not only the necessity of regulating religious affairs so as to insure a stable government, but also the need of perfect liberty and independence. With regard to independence he responded that we could be of tranquil minds; for even if England wished to retain a part of South America for herself she could not do so because the difficulties encountered in sending from time to time two thousand Englishmen to India to preserve dominions that she possessed in nearly absolute sovereignty were almost incredible. With regard to the establishment of a stable government of whatever type in the country, this outcome was what he considered the principal object; for only if those countries were well organized, and if they established a permanent régime, would they become happy among themselves and commercially useful to England. Otherwise the contrary result would take place; thus the interest between the Spanish continental col-

onies and England was perfectly mutual. This liberal conclusion pleased me much."²⁰

In his memorandum Miranda also mentioned that Lord Melville showed him the letters, documents, and maps which had been transmitted to Pitt through Nepean. Miranda further declared that he and Popham and Melville indicated upon maps the most advantageous points of operation for English expeditionary forces. He even recorded that Melville directed that a ship should be intrusted to Popham at Dover in preparation for the expedition. Transports and soldiers were to be gathered on the coast of Ireland. At the end of his memorandum Miranda penned this ardent phrase: "God grant that the affair may continue to progress!"²¹

On October 19 he addressed a note to Melville to urge immediate action lest the projects that they had considered should be defeated by England's enemies. In a letter to the Prime Minister three days later he expressed the hope that the plans which he and Popham had just submitted to Lord Melville had met with Pitt's approbation. He added that unless those projects were "executed with decision and celerity" their success might be considered as precarious.²² On October 29 Miranda wrote to Melville to inform him that Spanish agents in England were sending vessels to Vigo and Bilbao in order to inform their government that expeditions were being fitted out in England "against the Spanish possessions in America."²³

On the same day Popham wrote the following letter to Miranda that suggests the state of the enterprise as well as his condition of mind:

"It would have been the greatest satisfaction to me, if I could have administered any comfort whatever to you, for I assure you that independent of my personal respect, I think the object to which your attention has been so long called is of the greatest Consequence to this Country, but my friend

²⁰ "Conferencias con los Ministros de S. Mag. Brit.," Oct. 13-16, 1804, Mir. MSS., vol. 49. ²¹ *Ibid.* ²² *Ibid.* ²³ Mel. MSS., f. 41.

I not only fear from a letter that I have received from Evan that its accomplishment is very distant, and the selection of me for it still more so; if however it does take place I shall most heartily wish it success, and I will give you all the advice and assistance in my power to afford, tho I do confess it will be very distressing to me to see it in full Force without my being called upon to act at one of the points. If Sir Evan Nepean was in England I do think it would not only take place with some spirit, but that I should be employed most materially in its direction. I am very much disappointed in everything, but the extent of my Family is such that in respect to them I must bear with the vexatious disappointments I have met with. I trust to the interference of Fortune to extricate me, for I must doubt having any Friends, and yet I cannot think Lord Melville will totally desert me; I shall write a few lines to Davison today if I can. If not when you see him say he shall hear from me directly.”²⁴

On November 2 Popham sent another despondent letter to Miranda to complain that “a number of contemptible insects” were “rearing their Heads to sting” him and to provoke him to do something intemperate.²⁵ Soon afterwards this officer wrote to advise Miranda that in view of measures which were being taken against the ports of Spain he should ask Lord Melville for an interview.²⁶ On November 7 the promoter addressed that Minister to solicit this interview in the hope that he might be authorized to take “some decisive step” to avert the mischief from France which threatened his unfortunate country.²⁷ On November 16 Miranda appealed to Melville in a letter which we will print in full:

“It is really painful and distressing for me, to see the period prefixed for the commencement of the preconcerted operations on S. America arrived, and not receiving any intimation whatsoever—yet, some previous and indispensable arrangements, both in private, personal and political Matters, ought to precede my departure from this Place. I hope therefore my Lord, and I entreat your Lordship, no to defer

²⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 49.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Undated, *ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

any longer the only opportunity left to us by Providence, to rescue my unfortunate Country from falling into the unmerciful hands of French tyranny—and applying at the same time its wealth and future prosperity to the support and glory of Great Britain.

“I needn’t mention to your Lordship how essential it would be for the despatch and the success of the Enterprise, the actual coöperation of Sir Home Popham . . . but I must recommend in the present Case, the sound Roman War maxim.

*“Occasio in bello amplius solet juvare, quam Virtus.”*²⁸

From Dungeness on November 27, 1804, Popham wrote to Miranda to state that he had not been able to secure permission from the Admiralty to proceed to London. “I hope Lord Melville will soon think it right,” continued Popham, “to call me up to assist you; I am of less use here than I should be on the Monument. I want him to send you out to make the preliminary arrangements at Trinidad, without an hour’s loss of time, this is what you should press.”²⁹ Four days later, Melville expressed his opinion to Popham thus: “General Miranda is not more importunate with you than he is with me; but he unfortunately supposes us at war with Spain; we are not so * * *.”³⁰ At last Miranda provoked Melville to supplement that view in the following guarded message: “I am very sorry that you or any other Person who has occasion to write to me should be kept in suspense; but it necessarily arises from the nature of the Subject on which you address me. Whenever I am at liberty to be explicit either one way or other, there will be no unnecessary delay on my part.”³¹

The English attack on the treasure ships, which was made without a formal declaration of hostilities, was deeply resented by Spain. On December 12 she formally declared war on England. The news of open hostilities between these powers naturally stimulated Miranda. On December 14 he addressed a letter to Pitt in which he brusquely recapitulated his argument about an attack on South America from the British West In-

²⁸ Mel. MSS., f. 42. ²⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 49.

³⁰ *Minutes of a Court Martial*, p. 134. ³¹ Dec. 8, 1804, Mir. MSS., vol. 49.

dies. He declared that he had just received letters from Trinidad which implored him to proceed to America. Everything was ready, he assured the Minister, for a revolution in Venezuela. He requested that the documents which he had transmitted to Pitt through Nepean should be returned. Nor had he forgotten the need of fiscal readjustments. He declared that he had on that very day paid a visit to the Treasury and had solicited one Mr. Brown to speak to Pitt about his financial affairs: "I ask you to give orders about my finances before the holy days," pleaded Miranda, "as a thing which is indispensable before the departure."³²

To Rutherford, who was now in Trinidad, he wrote in sanguine words:

"The die has been cast, and war at last declared between England and Spain. The business that you know of has also been decided; but when will everything leave here? As yet I cannot foretell with precision. I am convinced that an expedition will be delayed from four to five months at least, although I am told that it will leave sooner."³³

At this time another plotter attempted to influence the first lord of the admiralty. On January 7, 1805, John McArthur submitted to Lord Melville the project of Antonine François de Bertrand-Moleville, a French statesman who had taken refuge in England, for the separation of the Indies from Spain. Bertrand-Moleville argued that it was futile for England to wage a purely defensive war against France, that, as the European part of the Spanish monarchy had become a province of the French Empire, it was necessary to wrest from Napoleon the vast Spanish domains in America. The émigré proposed that the first blow in this campaign should be struck against Mexico by an English army.³⁴

A knowledge of this plan presumably stimulated Miranda to present a fresh plea. On January 19, 1805, he addressed

³² Mir. MSS., vol. 49. ³³ Dec. 22, 1804, *ibid.*

³⁴ "Substance of Mons^r. Bertrand de Moleville's plan for alienating the Continent of S. America from Spain and for establishing independent States," *ibid.*

Lord Melville and again urged the need of immediate action by England if the Spanish Indies were to be saved from French influence. Though he declared that Nepean, who was now serving as one of the lords commissioners of the admiralty, was in "daily communication" with that Minister, yet he asked for "a short audience" with him in the hope that "the Political Arrangement of the Plan might receive considerable benefit from it."³⁵ On February 5, 1805, he addressed a letter to Nepean to regret that the important affair had again been postponed *ad infinitum*, and to request that he should solicit from Pitt and Melville permission for him to proceed to the Windward Islands on a warship bearing orders from the English Government that he should be allowed to move against the common enemy without any obstruction. "I believe," proceeded Miranda, "that it is infinitely wiser to act by ourselves when there is no hope of succor than to act with all the aid which England can offer us, after confusion and disorder are once introduced into Spanish America." He declared that his compatriots, however, would like to secure from England such aid as that which had been furnished by France and Spain to the United States during the American Revolution. In return the Spanish Americans would concede to England certain commercial advantages.³⁶

Apprehensions regarding Napoleon's plan to invade England had probably affected the attitude of the English cabinet toward the execution of Miranda's plans for the liberation of the Spanish Indies. Important events had indeed transpired in France. On May 18, 1804, the aspiring First Consul was proclaimed Emperor of the French. Three months later at Boulogne, the Emperor had reviewed the Grand Army, which had presumably been gathered in preparation for embarkation. Whatever may have been the actual designs of Napoleon for the dispatch of flotillas transporting thousands of soldiers across the channel, it is clear that suspicions concerning his designs were still rife in England. In the autumn of 1804

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

England, Russia, and Austria formed the Third Coalition against France. In February following Gillray published a caricature of the comedy of politics that was entitled the "Plumb-pudding in Danger; or State Epicures taking *un Petit Souper*." ³⁷ The cartoonist's conception was that "the great Globe itself" was too small to satisfy the insatiable appetites of Pitt and Napoleon. He portrayed them dividing the globe which was depicted as a plum pudding.

At this juncture Miranda's finances again caused him distress. On February 25, 1805, he was informed that Edward Cooke, under secretary for war, wished to see him in regard to the settlement of a "small account pending" from the previous administration. Besides two hundred and fifty pounds expended for "secret services" at New York and Trinidad, Miranda asked Cooke for one hundred and fifty pounds, which was three-fourths of his "annual gratification" for the year ending in December, 1804. ³⁸ On March 29 he addressed what was apparently his last communication to Lord Melville. He declared that he had received reports that armaments were being prepared in Spanish ports for vessels destined to the South American colonies.

"Give me leave therefore My Lord to beg of your Lordship the grant of that final decision that is wanted only for carrying our preconcerted Plans into execution. Or at least the indispensable authorizations to Col. Williamson and Mr. A. Davison for preparing the arms, and organizing the Corps already approved and recommended by Sir. E. Nepean.

"The absence of Sir Evan from the Admiralty, now and the pressure of actual circumstances, will excuse my solicitude at this present moment—and I hope will obtain from your Lordship's Patriotism and Wisdom such prompt and efficacious measures as will save my unfortunate country from its impending ruin and insure to Great Britain an everlasting source of commercial prosperity." ³⁹

³⁷ Wright, *Works of James Gillray*, p. 316.

³⁸ Miranda to Cooke, Feb. 25, 1805, Mir. MSS., vol. 49. ³⁹ *Ibid.*

On April 21, 1805, Miranda appealed to Nepean and declared that news of a war between England and Spain had produced a great sensation in the Spanish Indies. The Spanish Americans, he averred, were getting ready to rise against their masters. They wished him to join them. At least, they desired to secure his "plan of civil government."⁴⁰ Near the end of May, 1805, Vansittart sent the following letter to the revolutionary: "I have seen Sir Evan Nepean and desired him to communicate to Mr. Pitt your resolution of leaving England. If he sees Mr. P. today I will send you word in the Evening: and if not I shall be glad to see you on Thursday Morning at ten o'clock in Gt. George St."⁴¹ A diarial note enlightens us in regard to Miranda's fluctuating hopes and fears. He stated that although he had received assurances through Cooke that he would be allowed to carry out his plan of operations without delay, yet upon conferring with Vansittart his hopes again declined. Read a salient extract:

"Vansittart merely told me that Nepean had said no more yesterday than that Pitt had given him a reply to the effect that if the government had offered to allow me to depart whenever I should judge this convenient, then it would be necessary religiously to fulfill that pledge, but that it was imperative that I should promise him that I would do nothing in Trinidad without the consent of the governor. This decision completely surprised me. I observed that in plain language he wished to say merely that I might proceed to Trinidad, that the governor of that island would inform me of the wishes of Mr. Pitt regarding my person, and that instead of being a just or equitable arrangement this was a personal insult or an infamous exile without the least appearance of reason or authority. In fine, it was equivalent to a change from an inconvenient position to one that was unendurable and infamous, especially if we recollected what Governor Picton had done with Gual and other persons on that very island."⁴²

Miranda stated that Vansittart felt the force of his argu-

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* ⁴¹ Endorsed May 22, 1805, *ibid.* ⁴² "Mayo 24, 1805," *ibid.*

ment and advised him to see Nepean. After conferring with Nepean, Davison, and Williamson, the promoter felt much disgusted. Eventually Williamson brought word from Cooke that the views of Nepean about Miranda's departure for Trinidad were his personal ideas and not those of anyone else. As Miranda considered this an attempt by Under Secretary Cooke and others to embarrass him, he indignantly recorded this obscure but pious wish: "God grant that we may not have another repetition of the infamies of Dupéron or Hawkesbury in the Preliminaries of Amiens!" ⁴³

In a letter addressed to Vansittart dated June 1, 1805, Miranda reiterated his request for a final decision about his departure from English soil:

"You know better than anyone else the efforts that I have made for more than three years to bring the interests of this country into harmony with the independence and happiness of my native land. You know that I cannot longer defer my departure for South America without compromising my honor, my dignity, and, above all, the welfare of my country that seems destined to pass like Holland and Italy under the yoke of the modern Attila! Therefore I beg of you not to lose an instant in taking those steps that would be most reasonable and compatible with the interests of both England and Spanish America at a moment so critical!" ⁴⁴

After reaching the conclusion that he had not succeeded in his attempt to secure aid from England to revolutionize the Spanish Indies Miranda was tempted to seek the reasons for his failure. Through Nepean on June 13, 1805, he sent a justificatory note to Pitt. He assumed that Pitt's reluctance to grant him permission to proceed to Trinidad to initiate the emancipation of Spanish America was due to the inconsiderate actions or the "perfidious insinuations" of his enemies. Dupéron's conduct he denounced.

Miranda stigmatized Attorney General Law's description of him as a soldier of fortune as calumnious. Lord Bute, who

⁴³ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 49.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

had characterized him as an adventurer and contraband trader, was reminded of the justificatory decision of the Council of the Indies. Miranda maintained that he had never departed "an instant from the moral and political principles" which formed the bases of his relations with the Prime Minister in 1790. He suggested that Pitt should select two or three reliable persons to examine the charges which he presumed had been brought against him in order to determine whether or not they were incompatible with "the propositions and the information that he had had the honor of presenting to the British Government at various times concerning the independence" of the Spanish-American colonies. Should it be found that these charges were baseless, "mutual confidence," said Miranda, would be established between himself and Pitt. This understanding would promote "the welfare of a considerable portion of the civilized world." The conclusion of his plea was couched as follows:

"The importance of the object, as well as my delicacy towards those respectable persons who have honored me with their friendship, and have seconded me with their efforts during this long and painful negotiation, require me to take this step. This request is a justification which I owe to my country, to my compatriots, to my friends, and even to the government which has accorded me an asylum and an honorable support! In view of these circumstances, I cannot doubt, Sir, that you will grant this just and honorable demand for an investigation as the only mode of determining the truth of this accusation by the necessary justificatory proofs or of condemning to infamous contempt the vile and obscure calumniators." ⁴⁵

It was presumably regarding this communication that Vansittart thus assured Miranda: "*I showed your letter to Nepean who very much approves of it and thinks it may have a good effect.*" ⁴⁶ A week later Vansittart sent his injured

⁴⁵ Castlereagh, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, VII, 413-16.

⁴⁶ June 13, 1805, Mir. MSS., vol. 49. A copy of Miranda's justificatory note is found in the papers of Lord Bexley, Add. MSS., 31, 320, f. 43.

friend a message from the Irish Office as follows: "I saw N. this morning and he told me that he had just put your letter into Mr. Pitt's hands and had also given him a draft of an instruction to the Govr. of Trinidad relative to the mode of coöperating with you and that P. said he would attend to them but had not yet given him any answer."⁴⁷ A diarial fragment by Miranda dated July 5, 1805, thus describes the Prime Minister's response to his justificatory note:

"The reply to this letter was a verbal message by Sir Evan Nepean,—which was also repeated to me by Vansittart,—in which Mr. Pitt assured me that he was not in the least anxious or suspicious in regard to such rumors; for his opinion concerning my integrity and honor is unchangeable in spite of what might have happened years past in more turbulent times which he desired should be buried in perpetual oblivion. He besought me to be fully convinced that I merited from him the most favorable opinion and the most perfect confidence. My friend Vansittart nevertheless agreed with me that there must have been some basis for suspicion, and that in any case my justification was well made. There is no doubt that the impression must have been strong, for threats that seemed fierce were suddenly transmuted into courtesies and satisfactions."⁴⁸

In the latter part of June, 1805, Miranda continued to urge upon Nepean through Vansittart the imperative necessity that he should be granted immediately the promised passport for Trinidad.⁴⁹ On July 9 he addressed a plea directly to Nepean repeating that he had long impatiently awaited the decision of the English cabinet in regard to the succor promised Spanish Americans for their liberation from Spanish rule. He solicited Nepean to use his influence to bring the ministers to an immediate decision. He maintained that his object was to associate the commercial interests of Spanish America with those of England as "perfectly compatible" with each other.

Though there is no proof that his novel proposals were ac-

⁴⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 49. ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Miranda to Vansittart, June 19 and 26, 1805, *ibid.*

tually laid before Nepean, yet, as they embodied Miranda's ideas at this time, we shall notice his five alternative plans. (1) The plan arranged with Melville and Popham to dispatch a squadron bearing three thousand colonial troops as well as an armament for twenty thousand soldiers, who were to be recruited after the troops had disembarked. (2) The plan arranged with Nepean to dispatch a squadron bearing fifteen hundred colonial soldiers and an armament for ten thousand recruits to be assembled after the colonials had landed. (3) The plan arranged with Davison to send two small ships with armament for five thousand men to the island of Trinidad and to transport to the Spanish Continent one thousand volunteers from that island in the expectation that they would be reënforced by five thousand South Americans. (4) The plan proposed by Liverpool merchants to equip two vessels as privateers with an armament for two thousand men and to send them to the South American coast near Trinidad. (5) The plan to furnish the promoter simply with letters of recommendation that would authorize the governors of Curaçao and Trinidad to allow inhabitants of those islands to embark with arms and munitions on privateers or neutral vessels.⁵⁰

On July 13 Miranda sent word to Christopher Gore and Rufus King that after inconceivable delays he expected soon to depart for America.⁵¹ On the same day he addressed to Nepean an epistle that displayed agitation:

"I saw our friend Mr. Vansittart yesterday and I asked him to see you in order to accelerate the conclusion of my affair today or tomorrow at the latest, for I have already made all my special arrangements to embark in the course of next week. I am at the present moment engaged in writing to my friends and interested compatriots upon this subject, and in the supposition that I shall embark to join them within fifteen days.

"Thus you will see, my worthy friend, that I have not a single moment to lose, and that my fate will be decided in a very short time . . . May God grant that this will be settled

⁵⁰ Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

for the good of all! I hope that it will be, and I am even convinced of that. Next Monday I shall visit you at Fulham in order that I may definitely make my final arrangement, and so that I can recommend to you my house which I shall leave under the protection of our good friend Davison.

"I beg you above all to maintain the most profound secrecy in an affair so important and delicate not only for my personal safety as for the good of the enterprise itself."⁵²

A diarial entry dated July 16 carries the story a little farther. Miranda declared that, after having conferred with Pitt, Nepean advised him to be patient and to remain in England a little longer; "for the political affairs of Europe were not yet in that state of maturity to commence our enterprise." To this Miranda aptly responded that they could neither accuse him of precipitation after so many years of patience nor of lack of confidence; for, in the short space of a year, he had "four times witnessed the promises" given him "by His Majesty's Ministers broken." What made this worse, he continued, was the fact that no one had ever explained to him the motives for these decisions,—“everything being shrouded in mystery under the pretext of negotiations.” He offered to remain in England if, after being confidentially informed of the “secret motive” for these decisions, his friend Vansittart would assure him that to remain there as Pitt advised “would be compatible with the interest and honor” of his country.⁵³

On July 18 Miranda addressed a letter to the Prime Minister to ask for permission to embark for America in the course of the next week, and to declare that he wished to prevent the entrance of the “modern Gauls” into the South American Continent. He expressed the hope that “Divine Providence in seconding his views might render England, as well as his native country, forever independent, friendly, and happy.”⁵⁴ On the next day he got an epistle from Vansittart which declared that though he had received from Nepean “the fullest assurances of Mr. Pitt’s good will to the *cause*, he said nothing

⁵² Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

which could satisfy me of his intention to *act*, or which would justify me in dissuading you from pursuing your intention of going to America." In a diarial note adjoined to this epistle Miranda recorded that the Prime Minister had declared himself to be the best friend of his plans that could be imagined.⁵⁵ It is scarcely to be supposed, however, that the subtle Miranda believed all the assurances which Pitt purposely let fall. Obviously the Minister was anxious to keep the exile in leading strings not only that he might take advantage of his aid in revolutionizing the Spanish Indies should occasion offer but also that he might harass the Spanish Government, which was aware of Miranda's activity in London.

Though Miranda noted a peculiar anecdote to the effect that Pitt had said that, if money were a consideration to him England would detain him at all cost, yet, in reality, he was not without an eye to the main chance.⁵⁶ Early in August he took up with Nepean and Cooke the adjustment of his remuneration by England. According to Miranda's diary, Nepean informed him that Pitt wished that he should receive from the English Treasury sixteen hundred pounds for his expenses which should not be a substitute for his annual allowance of seven hundred pounds; "for whenever I might return to England my pension would be paid in the same terms as at present, and this ought to convince me of the sane intentions of the ministers and of the favorable opinion which they entertained of me."⁵⁷ At a later date, however, Cooke took the view that, because of the cash payment which was made, Miranda had relinquished all demands against the English Government.⁵⁸

Upon being told that although war in Europe was breaking out with renewed vigor, yet it was impossible to aid his enterprise, Miranda mistakenly reached the conclusion that the government's policy was due to an agreement with Spain that if she would maintain her neutrality and independence, England would not disturb the Spanish colonies. The

⁵⁵ "Julio 19," *ibid.* ⁵⁶ *Diario, ibid.* ⁵⁷ "Agosto 5," *ibid.*

⁵⁸ Turnbull to Nepean, Sept. 17, 1807, *ibid.*, vol. 56.

revolutionary recorded, however, that he and the ministers had reached an understanding. His story was that they agreed that he should keep the English squadrons near South America acquainted with his movements; "that we should maintain a secret correspondence; that he should be convinced that the government secretly wished him the best success in this enterprise; and that it would not fail to support us with all its power after the undertaking had begun. This was also the opinion of my friend Vansittart who assured me that he was intimately persuaded that the ministers had more hope in the outcome of the enterprise which I was about to execute in South America than in the entire European coalition."⁵⁹

There is little doubt that José de Anduaga, the Spanish minister in London, tried to spy upon the movements of the incendiary. In January, 1805, Anduaga warned his court that Spanish America was presumably the objective point of certain expeditions which were being contemplated in England.⁶⁰ A suggestive though inaccurate interpretation of Miranda's activities is embodied in a biographical sketch that Spain later published in South America. In this pasquinade that government alleged that with "what Miranda had stolen in the campaigns in France," he ultimately retired to England "where he remained until 1805, scheming at the side of the sanguinary and Machiavellian Pitt how to organize an expedition against Spain, his own country,—the country which had given him birth and honored him more than he deserved. Because of the fact that England, being confronted with the formidable army of Napoleon, could not think about an expedition as the perfidious Miranda wished, he could not execute his designs although he believed himself capable of making conquests in the best portions of our America."⁶¹

⁵⁹ *Diario*, "Agosto 5," Mir. MSS., vol. 49.

⁶⁰ Anduaga to Cevallos, Jan. 6, 1805, A. G. S., estado, 8170.

⁶¹ Medina, *Historia y bibliografía de la imprenta en Buenos-Aires*, p. 263.

Chapter XIV

MIRANDA'S ATTEMPT TO REVOLUTIONIZE VENEZUELA IN 1806

IN 1805 differences between Spain and America seemed to augur a war. The United States had claims against Spain for the seizure of American vessels and also for the suppression of the commercial entrepôt at New Orleans that had been conceded by the Treaty of San Lorenzo. A dispute had arisen between these nations because of the undetermined boundaries of Louisiana which in 1803 the United States had purchased from France. So embittered had the Marquis of Casa Yrujo become that in March, 1804, Secretary of State James Madison had warned that Minister not to forget the deference that was due to the government to which he was accredited.

Reports concerning the critical relations between Spain and the United States had reached Miranda's ears. His ruminations were influenced not only by the conviction that the prospect of a war with Spain would procure sympathy and aid for his cause in America, but also by discontent with the fluctuating policy of English ministers in regard to the Spanish Indies. On August 31, 1805, he addressed a brief note to Colonel Williamson announcing that he was about to leave his home in Grafton Street. Two days later, accompanied by his secretary, Miranda embarked at Gravesend on the ship *Polly* bound for the United States. His secretary, Thomas Molini, undertook to keep a journal of the voyage.

On November 9 Miranda disembarked at New York. He had again traveled under an assumed name; among his effects there was a letter of credit for some eight hundred pounds in favor of Mr. Martin. He soon made his friend Rufus King, who was now residing in New York, acquainted with his designs. He also talked enchantingly about them to his former traveling companion, Colonel Smith, who was now surveyor of the port of New York. Through Smith the South American

met a sea captain called Commodore Lewis and a merchant named Samuel Ogden. Both of these men became much interested in his projects.¹ Still Miranda soon decided to seek aid in Washington and Boston. To Henry Knox he sent a letter that contained the following passage: "The object of this letter is to inform you, that the moment is at last arrived when the great Scheme we had in view for this many years past is to take place, or at least to be attempted with great probability of success. And as you may have in your Power to coöperate at its execution either by you, or some of your Friends at the most critical and interesting moment, I send you this advise through an intimate friend at Boston that he may give you every information that could be required on the subject."² Miranda dispatched an agent named Armstrong to confer with Christopher Gore at Boston, while on November 29, 1805, he started on a trip to the capital via Philadelphia.³

During his brief sojourn in that city the revolutionary met ex-Vice President Aaron Burr. That discredited Republican, who was hatching a conspiracy which evidently involved the separation of Mexico from Spain, later admitted that he had been much pleased with the "social talents and colloquial eloquence" of Miranda but declared that he had carefully refrained from giving him an opportunity to disclose his views about the emancipation of the Spanish Indies.⁴ On his part Miranda stigmatized the Mephistophelian politician as a "detestable" and "infamous" man who had betrayed his plans to the Marquis of Casa Yrujo.⁵ To his government the Marquis intimated that Burr did not view with pleasure the advent of a rival conspirator. Before leaving Philadelphia the traveler visited his old acquaintance, Dr. Rush, who gave him a letter of introduction to Secretary Madison that mentioned the rôle of Miranda in the French Revolution. "He is still the friend of liberty," continued Rush, "and a believer in the practi-

¹ *Trials of William S. Smith and Samuel G. Ogden*, pp. ix, xx, xxi, 107; *King, Life and Correspondence*, IV, 578. ² Nov. 27, 1805, Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

³ *King*, IV., 469, 582. ⁴ *Private Journal*, II, 254.

⁵ Miranda to Smith, July 3, 1809, Mir. MSS., vol. 60.



Map of the Captaincy General of Venezuela with the Guianas, 1807.
From François de Pons, "Travels to South America."

cability of governments that shall have for their objects the happiness of nations, instead of the greatness of individuals. He knows your character, and longs to do homage to your principles.”⁶

Miranda reached Washington on December 6, 1805. On the next day he called on President Jefferson whom he found conferring with members of his cabinet. In his diary Miranda wrote that when he mentioned the warring nations of Europe, Jefferson said: “ ‘We will feed them all while they fight.’ ‘If they pay for it,’ added one of his secretaries, and the President added ‘to be sure.’ ” The visitor recorded that he next made a call upon Secretary Madison to suggest that, if the President considered it proper he wished to inform him confidentially about “certain purely American affairs.”⁷ Then Miranda made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Washington. On December 9, after visiting the Senate and the House of Representatives, he received a brief note from Madison expressing a desire to meet him.⁸

On December 11 Miranda had an interview with the Secretary of State in which he mentioned his design to liberate the Spanish Indies. According to his own story, the revolutionary told Madison that to ensure the success of his plan it would only be necessary for the United States Government to wink at his activities. He even wrote in his diary that the Secretary declared that citizens of the United States could aid him. Miranda noted that in an interview two days later Madison said that although his government looked favorably on the project for the emancipation of South America yet he did not see how it could furnish assistance at that juncture without showing a lack of good faith. To this Miranda responded that the South Americans only desired such indirect aid as France had furnished the United States in the American Revolution before the Treaty of Alliance was signed. He reasoned that the United States should give her consent and wink at his

⁶ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 363, note c.

⁷ Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

⁸ Dec. 9, 1805, *ibid.*

enterprise. Then Madison replied that he did not conceive the need of his government either smiling upon the affair or viewing it with anger; for citizens of the United States could do whatever her laws did not absolutely prohibit, especially in an affair which was "honorable and useful."⁹ In letters to Turnbull and Vansittart, Miranda stretched the truth when he asserted that the United States Government had given its "tacit consent" to his revolutionary enterprise.¹⁰

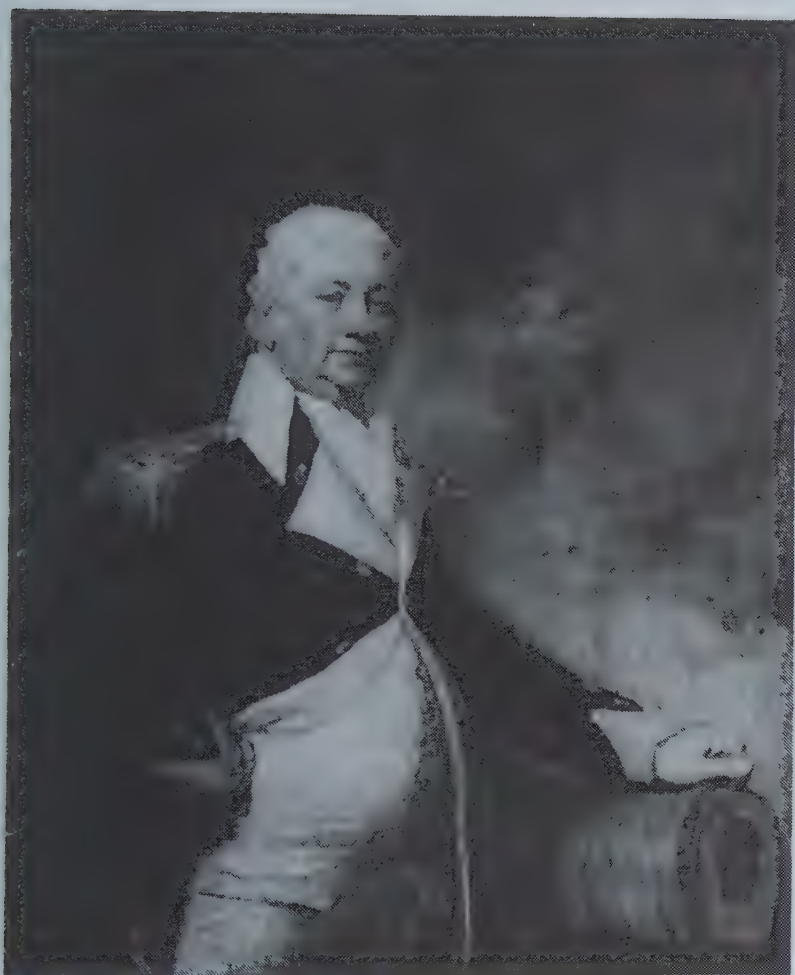
On the afternoon of December 13, by invitation of the President, the South American dined with him in company with his daughter and certain congressmen. In his diary Miranda wrote that during the dinner he sat by the President's side. The diarist recorded that during the conversation Jefferson exclaimed that he had been born too soon to see the splendor of the New World which was steadily advancing toward complete independence.¹¹ Before leaving the capital Miranda also visited George Clinton, a former acquaintance who had become vice president. Dr. Thornton of the Department of State became warmly interested in Miranda's design. Jonathan Dayton, ex-Senator from New Jersey, also became conversant with the affair and secretly imparted to Yrujo information about the proposed filibustering expedition. Miranda met his old friend Stephen Sayre with whom he not only discussed his revolutionary projects but also his interviews with Jefferson and Madison.

In an account of his conversations with Miranda the Secretary of State declared that he had informed the adventurer that, as the United States was in amity with Spain, "nothing would be done in the least inconsistent with that sincere and honorable regard to the rules imposed by their situation. * * *" The Secretary avowed that if the United States should undertake hostile measures against Spain these would be performed "not in an underhand and illicit way, but in a way consistent with the laws of war and becoming our national character." According to his story, Madison reminded Miranda that "it

⁹ *Diario*, Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

¹⁰ Jan. 4, 1806, *ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*



*Henry Knox. Painting by Gilbert Stuart. In the
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.*

would be incumbent on the United States to punish any transactions within their jurisdiction which might according to the law of nations involve an hostility against Spain, and that a statute of Congress had made express provision for such a case."¹² Upon learning of Miranda's visit to the capital Yrujo instructed the Spanish consul in New York to spy upon him and to discover what he had accomplished.¹³ The English Minister Anthony Merry meantime reported to Downing Street that he had reason to believe that the American Government did not have confidence in Miranda and that his visit to Washington had "therefore been attended with no material result."¹⁴

After his return to New York on December 29 Miranda capitalized his conferences with Secretary Madison. He informed Smith that his project had the "tacit approbation and good wishes" of the government and that there would be no difficulty in the way of American citizens promoting his plans if the laws were not "openly violated."¹⁵ He assured King that the United States Government would "wink at the things being done by individuals."¹⁶ He vigorously pushed the preparations for an expedition. Through Ogden he secured vessels to transport his followers to South America. A memorandum in Ogden's handwriting found in Miranda's papers indicates that the merchant agreed to advance about twenty thousand dollars for arming and provisioning a vessel of one hundred and eighty-seven tons called the *Leander* and two smaller vessels named the *Emperor* and the *Indostan*.¹⁷ On January 4, 1806, the general drew bills of exchange aggregating two thousand pounds upon Turnbull and Vansittart.¹⁸ On January 25 Miranda gave Ogden drafts on parties at Trinidad that amounted to five thousand pounds, while that confiding merchant agreed to excuse him from all financial responsibility if

¹² Madison, *Writings*, VII, 202-3.

¹³ Yrujo to Stoughton, Dec. 23, 1805, A. H. N., estado, 5555.

¹⁴ Merry to Mulgrave, Jan. 3, 1806, F. O., 5/48.

¹⁵ Biggs, *History of Don Francisco de Miranda's Attempt to Effect a Revolution in South America*, pp. 272-73, note.

¹⁶ King, IV, 530-31. ¹⁷ Undated, Mir. MSS., vol. 50. ¹⁸ *Ibid*.

those orders were not duly honored.¹⁹ In a letter to Vansittart the organizer thus linked his activities in England and the United States:

“After having discovered on my arrival in this country that the Federalists and the government were in open war I decided to proceed to the capital in order to sound the disposition of the administration in regard to me and the project with which you are acquainted. I found it very well disposed: it gave me a perfect, tacit consent, and left to merchants the option of doing the rest. Mr. K—— and Mr. G—— who had promised much, have done nothing upon the pretext that nothing was intrusted to them. However, other merchants have promoted the affair, and have cleverly equipped me so that I can depart on the tenth of this month. I assure you that the arrangements are more extensive and more solid than those which we had formed with Davison. I am persuaded that in the ordinary course of events we shall succeed, and that before three months you will know the result. Give me your support for that period, and our wishes will at last be accomplished!

“Mr. K. only sent your letter to the capital. Thus, having promised a small support to those respectable persons who follow me in considerable number, I am forced to raise two thousand pounds by drawing upon you and Mr. Turnbull rather than to depart without the supplies which are indispensably necessary or to make my secret known among merchants who are not personally interested, which might perhaps ruin the affair! I beg you to speak with Davison or with any other person whom you may judge proper in order that the needed money may be advanced with a premium or with a lien upon the undertaking. As American merchants are furnishing forty-five thousand pounds for this purpose, should not those of London advance two thousand for an enterprise which promises them at least an equal benefit? Finally, do what you can in this part of the affair in order that I may complete the essentials with success.

“I leave to your discretion whether to communicate a part

¹⁹ Ogden's receipt, Jan. 25, 1806 (copy), Mir. MSS., vol. 53.

of this letter to our friend, Sir Evan. I shall write him without fail upon the completion of the enterprise.

"Your sincere friendship is a guarantee that I need not again recommend that which interests me in Grafton Street." ²⁰

Colonel Smith undertook to secure men for the enterprise. Some followers he engaged directly; others he got through agents. The precise object of the expedition was ordinarily concealed; recruits were induced to enlist under a variety of pretexts. An agent called Fink, who was a butcher in Bowery Lane, seems to have engaged some volunteers to serve in "the President's guard." ²¹ In addition to the assurance of regular pay, attractive rewards or flattering promises of advancement were often held out as inducements. Unlucky persons with shattered fortunes were thus lured into a strange service which held a prospect of lucrative returns. One deluded mortal appears to have arranged that a friend should take charge of all the "gold, silver, gold-ore, and bullion" which he might bring home. ²² On the other hand, Mrs. W. S. Smith sent an anxious letter to Miranda to express the opinion that she did not know of any other person to whom she could with so much confidence intrust her son. ²³ The very air of mystery that enveloped the undertaking tempted some adventurous spirits to enlist. Because of widely different motives, about two hundred recruits entered the service of a leader whom few of them had ever seen. ²⁴

Military supplies were meantime embarked on the *Leander*. According to a report of the quartermaster, they included 582 muskets, 16 blunderbusses, 15 carbines, 19 nine pounders, 8 six pounders, 2 brass two pounders, 2 petards, 440 cutlasses, 297 hangers and sabres, 6,500 cartridges, 1,586

²⁰ Jan. 4, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 50. To Miranda's letter of Nov. 27, 1805, General Knox had replied on Dec. 14 to avow that it had afforded him "great delight" to learn of Miranda's arrival in the United States, but to state that he was returning to his family which was then in Maine, *ibid.*

²¹ *Trial*s, pp. 147, 149, 171.

²² Sherman, *A General Account of Miranda's Expedition*, p. 19 and note

²³ Jan. 29, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 50. ²⁴ Molini's Journal, *ibid.*, vol. 52.

pounds of ball, 5 tons of lead, and 10,000 musket flints.²⁵ These supplies were kept out of the captain's manifest in order that the port officers might be deceived as to the purpose of the voyage. On February 2, 1806, the *Leander*, which was cleared out for Jacmel in the island of Santo Domingo, put to sea with a fine breeze from the northwest.²⁶

Ten days before his departure, Miranda had mailed two letters to Washington. With a letter to the President he sent a copy of Molina's history of Chile; he expressed the hope that if the prediction which Jefferson had made about the destiny of Colombia was to be realized, it might be consummated by the "generous efforts of her own children."²⁷ In a letter to Madison the South American thanked him for his attentions and expressed the belief that the important affairs which he had elucidated to him would remain "the most profound secret until the final result of that delicate affair." Miranda affirmed that in New York he had conformed "in everything to the intentions of the government" which he hoped to have comprehended "with exactness and discretion." The French original in the Madison manuscripts bears two annotations by the Secretary of State which were presumably made on July 22: the first note records that the important affairs mentioned were what "passed with the Brit. Govt."; while the second declares that Miranda's assertion that he had conformed to the intentions of the American Government was "not true."²⁸ It seems that the exact truth lay rather with the Secretary than with the filibuster.

Although Minister Yrujo had gained an inkling of the interviews between Madison and Miranda, yet he did not comprehend the real object of the conspirator until after the *Leander* had weighed anchor. Then he dispatched warnings to the governor of Cuba, the Viceroy of New Spain, and the Captain General of Venezuela. To Secretary Madison he sent

²⁵ Armstrong, "General Return of Arms, Accoutrements * * * on Board the Ship *Leander*, April 14th, 1806," *Mir. MSS.*, vol. 50.

²⁶ Molini's Journal, *ibid.*, vol. 52.

²⁷ King, IV., 584. ²⁸ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 368, note c.

a protest against the departure of the filibusters. Yrujo also brought his complaint to Madison's attention through the French Minister at Washington. Further, the Spanish Minister at Paris denounced to Talleyrand the alleged unneutral conduct of the United States.²⁹

Yrujo's protests presumably stimulated the administration to take measures against Miranda's abettors in New York. Colonel Smith was removed from office. In company with Ogden he was indicted for aiding to equip the *Leander*. During his trial Smith affirmed that he had promoted the filibustering expedition because he believed that it was being prepared with the consent of Jefferson and Madison. Smith and Ogden addressed a memorial to Congress in which they asserted that though federal officials in New York City had been cognizant of the equipment of the expedition, yet they had taken no steps to prevent its departure. In general, public opinion in that city was in favor of the accused men who were eventually acquitted.

In a jubilant mood Ogden sent Miranda a letter declaring that they had triumphed over their enemies and the oppression of the government.³⁰ Jefferson, who was squirming under newspaper criticism of the administration, indited a letter to the *Aurora* in which he denied that either he or Madison had countenanced Miranda's expedition: "To know as much of it as we could was our duty, but not to encourage it."³¹ After Smith and Ogden were acquitted, Madison declared that a disclosure would be left to time which would "do full justice to all parties."³² On April 4, 1806, the *Richmond Enquirer* printed a letter from Stephen Sayre who affirmed that Miranda would meet delegates from Mexico, New Granada, and Venezuela at Trinidad. "If Miranda be not gone to that Island," added Sayre, "you may laugh at my credulity!"

When the real purpose of the expedition became known,

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 369-74. ³⁰ Castlereagh, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, VII, 416.

³¹ Randall, *Life of Thomas Jefferson*, III, 167.

³² Madison, *Letters and Other Writings*, II, 226.

some American newspapers made favorable comments. The *Newark Centinel* said of Miranda: "We are among those who wish him success, and who would gladly echo his triumphs. Not because we are anxious to see him decorated with the ensigns of royalty or clothed with the majesty of wealth, but because a great empire would be open to the enterprise of our citizens, and an abject and miserable people would become a nation of freemen." The *Richmond Enquirer* reasoned that if the projected attack were successful, Spain might "tremble for all her possessions in South America"; a "new confederation of States might start into existence." Its editor hoped that General Miranda might become "the Washington of South America."³³

After the *Leander* had been several days at sea the commander appeared on deck. A callow youth named Moses Smith, who had joined Miranda, declared that an "air of authority distinguished him" from the other members of the company. "He had on a red gown and slippers," continued Smith, "and his physiognomy shewed that he was not of our country. It was whispered about that he was a great general called Miranda, whose name had been celebrated."³⁴

Some of the recruits now realized that his real object was to start a rebellion in South America; and they were encouraged to believe that their government had given its "implied sanction" to the enterprise. Rumors were likewise circulated that the "countenance and coöperation of the British" would be given. Further, the supposed disposition of South Americans to flock to Miranda's standard was made the basis for high expectations of success. The courteous and conciliatory disposition that their leader displayed at this time won the adherence of many of his deluded recruits. One astute lad declared that Miranda advised the young men to study mathematics and Spanish. He entertained them by expounding his ideas about politics. To illustrate his remarks he drew streams

³³ In the *Federal Gazette*, March 8, April 8, and June 30, 1806.

³⁴ Smith, *History of the Adventures and Sufferings of Moses Smith*, p. 79.

of knowledge from his own varied experiences. Not only were his followers impressed by his retentive memory but also by his marvelous power of conversational eloquence. One of his disciples, at least, received the impression that he intended to sow "the seeds of heroic deeds; of liberty and revolution."³⁵

On February 13, 1806, the vessel was hailed by the English frigate *Cleopatra* commanded by Captain Wight. His first lieutenant impressed a number of the *Leander's* sailors on the claim that they were Englishmen. Not until after Miranda had visited the frigate and by means of documents extracted from his portfolio of papers convinced Captain Wight that his undertaking was "advantageous to the British Government," would that commander allow the expedition to proceed.³⁶ As Wight released some American sailors who had been impressed into the English service, Miranda apparently promised that, if his enterprise were successful, the ports of Venezuela would be opened to English vessels. He then indited a letter to Admiral Mitchell, commander in chief of the English squadron on the North American station, to request that the *Cleopatra* should be permitted to join his expedition.³⁷

General Miranda soon began to organize the "Colombian Army." On February 14 he appointed officers for his motley followers. The men were organized into groups of engineers, artillerymen, artificers, light dragoons, riflemen, and infantrymen. The deck of the *Leander* presented a busy scene. Men who were ignorant of military tactics were studying manuals of the art of war. Sergeants were drilling recruits. Carpenters were making staves for the pikes; while an armorer was repairing "old muskets, pointless bayonets, and rusty swords" that had been secreted on board. Printers were taking off the press the commissions of the commander in chief of the expeditionary army to his officers. The "Colombian" flag was first displayed on March 12: its colors were red, blue and yel-

³⁵ Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 376-77.

³⁶ Wight, "Memo. for General Miranda," Feb. 13, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

³⁷ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VI, 518-19.

low. Soon afterwards Miranda's officers signed articles of war in which they swore to be faithful to the people of South America.³⁸

A draft found in the manuscripts of Miranda shows that, presumably by the aid of one of his followers, he had framed a series of regulations for the commerce of liberated Colombia. These regulations provided that immediately upon arriving in a Colombian port each master of a foreign ship was to make a report to the local collector of customs stating the nationality of the vessel, the number of the crew, and the names of the passengers. Every master was also to present to the collector a manifest of the cargo on board, and within twenty-four hours was to make a regular entry at the custom-house under penalty of confiscation. No goods were to be landed on Colombian soil without a permit from the collector. Merchandise landed from the United States was to be taxed a certain, unspecified per cent on its invoice value. An export duty was also to be laid on all goods leaving the ports of Colombia in vessels belonging to United States citizens. American vessels entering such ports were also to pay tonnage duties. At regular intervals reports were to be made to the commander in chief of the Colombian army concerning the volume of imports and exports and the amount of import and export duties that had been collected.³⁹

At this time Miranda appeared in a most attractive rôle; he no longer stood haughtily aloof: ⁴⁰

"He assumed the manner of a father and instructor to the young men. He spoke of the prospect of success, and of the preparations made for him with great confidence. The glory and advantages of the enterprise were described in glowing colours. At another time he detailed his travels, his sufferings and escapes in a manner to interest both their admiration and sympathy. He appeared the master of languages, of science and literature."⁴¹

³⁸ Biggs, pp. 16-35.

³⁹ "General Observations for the Government of the Commerce in the Ports of Columbia," Mir. MSS., vol. 51. ⁴⁰ Biggs, p. 27. ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

Such was Miranda at his best. After the *Leander* had reached the island of Santo Domingo a bitter dispute occurred between Captain Lewis and an officer named Armstrong. This controversy displayed the commander in a bad light. "A great deal of indecent warmth was shown on all sides," said Biggs, "but in the highest degree by the general himself, who appeared, before the storm was over, more fit for bedlam than for the command of an army."⁴² Other quarrels about the respective authority of Lewis and Miranda sadly lowered the general's prestige.

Messengers who had been sent from Jacmel to Port-au-Prince to invite Captain Jacob Lewis, a brother of Miranda's commander, to join the expedition with the *Emperor* returned with the disappointing news that this cautious captain had decided not to coöperate. After more than a month's delay, Miranda accordingly left Jacmel where he had secured only two small vessels called the *Bacchus* and the *Bee* and a few recruits. Possibly because of the incompetence of the pilot, the *Leander* did not reach Aruba until April 11. So slow was her progress after leaving this island that the commander held a council of war. This body laid the blame for the unskillful management of the vessel upon Captain Thomas Lewis.⁴³ While the *Leander* was proceeding toward the Venezuelan coast most of her sailors were induced to enlist under the Colombian standard. With less than two hundred poorly armed followers Miranda was at last ready to strike a blow at Spanish power.

Warnings sent by Yrujo had stimulated Guevara Vasconcelos, the captain general of Venezuela, to direct the commanders of coast guard vessels to be vigilant.⁴⁴ The delays of the expedition had given the Spaniards ample time to prepare against attack. In consequence when Miranda attempted to disembark near Puerto Cabello during the night of April 27,

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

⁴³ Biggs, pp. 24-55; Sherman, pp. 40-43; "Minutes of Proceedings in a Council of War," April 21, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

⁴⁴ Yrujo to Cevallos, April 16, 1806, A. H. N., estado, 5555.

his efforts were thwarted by two small Spanish vessels. Shots were exchanged between them and the *Leander*. "The action," said Miranda's secretary, "continued for about 40 Minutes (without our receiving any injury) when it was deemed prudent to decline the contest, from their decided superiority both in weight of Metal, and the number of their Men. The signal was kept flying for the two schooners to join us."⁴⁵ As the *Bee* and the *Bacchus* were unable to keep up with the *Leander*, they were intercepted by the enemy. In the words of a filibuster, "the redoubtable Miranda and the Almighty Lewis fled," leaving about sixty recruits on board the unarmed schooners.⁴⁶ After a manly defense, late in the afternoon of April 29, the hapless adventurers surrendered to the vengeful Spaniards. The vanquished men were bound and carried in triumph to the Continent.

The unfortunate captives were thrust into the filthy dungeons of a castle at Puerto Cabello. Soon they were summoned to stand trial on the charge of "piracy, rebellion, and murder." They were subjected to a rigorous examination in Spanish fashion; and the colonial officials took pains to gather information about any South Americans who might be in Miranda's confidence. On July 12, 1806, Captain General Vascócelos, who presided over the trial, pronounced judgment. Ten of the prisoners were condemned to death by hanging. Fifteen were to serve ten years in a prison at Omoa. Thirteen were to spend the same period in Morro Castle at Puerto Rico. Sixteen were to pass eight years of imprisonment in a castle near Cartagena. Three lads were to be dispatched to the fortress of Cartagena until the King's pleasure in their cases might be made known. The heads of the ten chief malefactors were to be ignominiously exposed to the public gaze. The attempt of the filibusters was designated as "an atrocious crime," while their leader was stigmatized as a "perfidious traitor."

⁴⁵ Molini's Journal, Mir. MSS., vol. 52. ⁴⁶ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, III, 681.

The public hangman was directed to burn Miranda's proclamation as well as his captured banner. His portrait was to be publicly burned in effigy. The inhabitants of Venezuela were prohibited from maintaining any relations with the filibuster except in order to capture him. In the King's name thirty thousand pesos were to be offered as a reward for the traitor's body, dead or alive. When describing the barbarous manner in which the sentence was executed upon the captives, one of them not inappropriately said that in "the mean insults and sanguinary triumphs of the Spaniards we read Miranda's apology." ⁴⁷

Although the capture of these men dampened the spirits of the *Leander's* company, yet Miranda soon regained his poise. A council of war decided that, before attempting another landing, the expedition should proceed to Trinidad and solicit aid from its governor. On May 26, 1806, however, the *Leander* was chased by an armed ship which fired at her. That vessel proved to be the English sloop of war *Lily*. Her captain, Donald Campbell, described the *Leander's* master as a "perfect pirate" in idea; he declared that the crew was "perfectly dissatisfied and nearly in a state of mutiny." ⁴⁸

When Campbell boarded the *Leander* he told Miranda of the death of William Pitt. The Minister's noble frame, which had been long racked with gout, had received its death blow by the news that his last coalition against France was bound to dissolve because of the decision of the Prussian King to accept Hanover at the hands of Napoleon. Eventually George III had asked Lord Grenville to select a new cabinet. In consequence there was formed the ministry of "All the Talents": Grenville became prime minister and first lord of the treasury; Earl Spencer was made secretary of state for home affairs; Nicholas Vansittart became secretary of the treasury, and William Windham took the post of secretary for war and the colonies.

Miranda's cruise in the Caribbean naturally piqued the

⁴⁷ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 380. ⁴⁸ *Am. Hist. Rev.*, VI, 523.

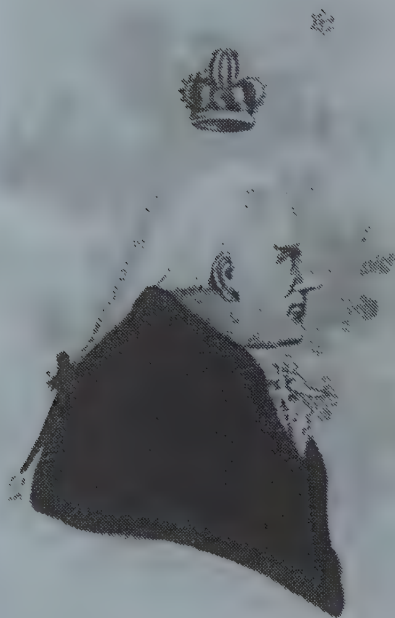
curiosity of the new Prime Minister. In a letter to Lord Auckland on June 5, 1806, Grenville said that "an immense question is opening by this attempt (successful hitherto) of Miranda's on the Caracas. The thing was launched by our predecessors, as a matter of connivance only, without any plan for acting in consequence of it. How far shall we now countenance it, or engage in it?"⁴⁹

While Lord Grenville was speculating about the policy to be adopted toward Miranda, under the escort of the *Lily* his expedition proceeded to the island of Grenada where it was hospitably received by Governor Maitland. That governor supplied provisions which enabled the *Leander* to sail for the island of Barbadoes. There Miranda became acquainted with Admiral Alexander Cochrane. So effectively did the revolutionary describe to the admiral his negotiations with English ministers that on June 9 they signed a significant agreement. In this pact Cochrane promised to support the *Leander* with a naval force and agreed to protect her from attack by the Spaniards. He conceded Miranda permission to recruit forces at Barbadoes and Trinidad. On the other hand, Miranda promised that, in case of his success, English citizens would be assisted in the recovery of their just debts in Spanish America and that the independent Spanish-American nations would concede commercial privileges to England. This provisional agreement was to remain in force until a commercial treaty should be negotiated between England and the new states.⁵⁰ Cochrane urged in a dispatch to Earl Spencer that five thousand English soldiers should be sent at once to aid Miranda to liberate South America. His justification for this policy was a belief that in the case of Miranda's success a great market would be opened in the emancipated colonies for English manufactures.

Miranda also solicited aid from General Bowyer, commander of the English soldiers at the Leeward Islands. In a letter

⁴⁹ *Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue*, VIII, 179.

⁵⁰ Antepara, *South American Emancipation*, pp. 213-15.



GENERAL MIRANDA.

General Miranda was born at Caracas, Venezuela, on the 13th of March, 1754. He was educated at the University of Caracas, and was a member of the Academy of Sciences. He was a brave and able soldier, and was distinguished by his valor and patriotism. He was a leader of the revolution in Venezuela, and was one of the founders of the Republic of Venezuela. He was a man of great energy and determination, and was a true patriot. He was a man of great courage and bravery, and was a true leader. He was a man of great intelligence and ability, and was a true statesman. He was a man of great honor and integrity, and was a true gentleman. He was a man of great faith and devotion, and was a true Christian. He was a man of great love and compassion, and was a true friend. He was a man of great strength and power, and was a true hero. He was a man of great wisdom and insight, and was a true philosopher. He was a man of great beauty and grace, and was a true prince. He was a man of great nobility and refinement, and was a true aristocrat. He was a man of great distinction and fame, and was a true celebrity. He was a man of great influence and power, and was a true statesman. He was a man of great honor and integrity, and was a true gentleman. He was a man of great faith and devotion, and was a true Christian. He was a man of great love and compassion, and was a true friend. He was a man of great strength and power, and was a true hero. He was a man of great wisdom and insight, and was a true philosopher. He was a man of great beauty and grace, and was a true prince. He was a man of great nobility and refinement, and was a true aristocrat. He was a man of great distinction and fame, and was a true celebrity. He was a man of great influence and power, and was a true statesman.

"General Miranda. An accurate Likeness taken at Barbadoes," June, 1806. From a print in the Ibero-American Library of the late Senhor Manoel de Oliveira Lima, Washington, D. C.

dated June 10 he conveyed the impression that the English Government had decided to aid him if he were successful. He asked for some seven hundred soldiers, as well as arms, munitions, and provisions. General Bowyer informed Miranda, however, that, not having received any instructions from his government about the expedition, he must decline to support it. Miranda's attempt to persuade the governor of Barbadoes to assist him was likewise without fruit. Just before his departure from that island Miranda addressed a letter to Vansittart asking him to do everything in his power to induce the new ministry to support his undertaking.⁵¹

Meantime rumors about Miranda's expedition had provoked much excitement in Venezuela. In dispatches to the Spanish Government the Captain General had expressed his alarm. At the same time he took vigorous measures to thwart or to defeat the patriot-filibuster. Arms were distributed and fortifications were strengthened. Soldiers were stationed at strategic points. A thousand inhabitants of the province of Caracas made contributions to a fund for its protection. The *cabildo* of the capital city denounced Miranda as a "conspirator," a "traitor" who had committed heinous crimes. Early in May it started subscriptions to a fund to reward anyone who might capture him. With a rhetorical flourish it announced that all the citizens of the capital wished to see the traitor "reduced to ashes."⁵² In the distant city of Bogotá the Viceroy became apprehensive about the safety of New Granada.

After increasing his company by a score of men, who were mostly adventurers or vagabonds, on June 20, 1806, Miranda sailed from Barbadoes. The *Leander* was now accompanied by the *Lily*, the English brig *Express*, and a merchant schooner named the *Trimmer*. The misconduct of Captain Lewis having brought him into much disfavor, he relinquished his post, and Miranda intrusted the ship to the guidance of

⁵¹ Robertson, *Miranda*, pp. 382-83; Miranda to Vansittart, June 17, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 50.

⁵² Rojas, *El general Miranda*, pp. 179-85. See further the intercepted correspondence in the *Evening Post*, Nov. 9, 1806.

"a very inexperienced young man." At Trinidad the expedition was accorded sympathetic treatment from Governor Hislop. He even permitted volunteers to be recruited from the insular militia to serve under Colonel de Rouvray and two other English officers who joined the expedition. According to Molini's journal, besides sailors, about one hundred and ninety men were thus added to the expeditionary force.⁵³ Writing to Vansittart, Miranda avowed that Hislop had given him "a cordial and warm reception, equal'd only by that of Admiral Cochrane at Barbadoes." Miranda explained a financial device to which he had recourse in these words:

"I was obliged by the pressure of Circumstances to draw £688-2-0 Stg at Barbadoes, having received at that moment news from the Continent of S. A. that absolutely required the sailing of the Expedition—I hope the Government will not refuse the payment of this small sum, in consideration of the magnitude of the Object, and the mutual interest of both Nations. I shall remain accountable for the payment of the whole."⁵⁴

In a letter addressed to Lord Cochrane on June 29, Miranda thus explained his intentions and hopes and fears:

"We learn at this Moment that six sail of the line and one frigate are at anchor at Martinique, ready to sail, and in very good order, etc.—Under these circumstances H. E. Governor Hislop, Captain Campbell, and myself have agreed to suspend our departure until we hear from you.

"The information we have been able to collect here from the opposite Continent is satisfactory, and promises fair success on Cu—a, that is the Point we have agreed upon: though the apparent object is the Gulph and Guarapiche river.

"The public spirit in this Island is in general for us: and the Governor is friendly and interested in the success of the Enterprise as yourself.

"We shall be able to collect it appears from 5 to 700 Volun-

⁵³ Biggs, 99; Molini's Journal, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁵⁴ June 25, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 51.

teers of the Militia and Inhabitants of the Country; which force is deemed, by the best informed People from the opposite side, under the command of the intelligent officers that direct it, quite sufficient to ensure success.

"We have thought necessary to lay a general Embargo upon all Vessels at Trinidad, until we hear from you; this circumstance alone [will] be sufficient to request of you the most expeditious answer, and as we are decided not to move before we hear from you, I hope you will not delay one single instant in transmitting to us this Answer.

"I confess to you, dear Admiral, that when I see the opportunity that chance has put at this Moment in the Enemy's Hands of crushing our Enterprise, by subduing and taking Possession of some of the principal Ports of S. America before any force from G. B. can enable us to frustrate their pernicious views, I shall deem it a miracle if the New World by our efforts at this moment is rescued from bearing the disgraceful yoke of France."⁵⁵

Meantime the house of Turnbull was taking steps to profit by a favorable turn in Miranda's fortunes. On June 7 Turnbull wrote to Miranda asking him to point out a few ports in the Spanish-American provinces to which English ships laden with manufactured goods could proceed in safety. You may if you choose, added the calculating merchant, "appoint me your Commercial European Agent as that may enable me to be of service, in promoting your views."⁵⁶ Several days later Turnbull wrote again and inclosed some circular letters in Spanish that his firm had prepared for distribution in South America. These anticipatory broadsides, which were dated June 20, 1806, began by mentioning the glorious events that had resulted from the efforts of General Miranda, events that would ensure "an intimate and friendly connection" between England and Spanish America. Under the auspices of this old friend, Turnbull and Son offered the South Americans their services in England or any part of the Continent. "You may calculate with certainty that all the products of this

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 52.

province which used to arrive in England via Spain burdened with imposts of every kind will have an advantageous market here; the same results will take place with products of English factories that were formerly sent to Spanish America via Spain because of the saving of the heavy duties that they paid in Spain, and upon their arrival in the colonies. So great would the economies be that we should not be surprised if these manufactures unloaded in America would not cost one half of their former price.”⁵⁷

Upon being informed that the French squadron which had been at Martinique had sailed for Europe, Miranda decided to make another attack on South America at once, especially as assurances seem to have reached him that the colonists “were anxiously awaiting his arrival to free them from the Spanish yoke.”⁵⁸ After he had secured additional “English supplies” and increased his fighting force to some three hundred men, he left Trinidad. Admiral Cochrane directed Captain Campbell to take charge of the seven English vessels which composed “the expedition attached to General Miranda.”⁵⁹ On the eve of his departure the general addressed a letter of thanks to Governor Hislop that contained this introspective commentary on his venture:

“The news which I have received from the Colombian Continent impels me to leave this island without delay in order to take succor to my native land that has either to cast off the yoke of Spain or to become the unfortunate slave of France like Holland and Switzerland. No other consideration would impel me at this moment to leave the island of Trinidad; for the succor furnished me by new recruits has been far from completing the number which is necessary for an enterprise so important as that which we shall attempt to begin.

“The conviction which I have reached that a delay will not cause any increase in my forces,—for all the remonstrances that I have been able to present to the chiefs who command the land forces in the English West Indies have not made me

⁵⁷ Inclosure in Turnbull to Miranda, June 23, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 51.

⁵⁸ Molini's Journal, *ibid.* ⁵⁹ Marshall, *Royal Naval Biography*, X, 404.

feel certain of their immediate coöperation,—has caused me to reach a decision which, however hazardous it may be, is perhaps the only one that I can now execute. I hope that Providence, reënforcing the pure intentions which animate us, will grant us success; and that, when better informed, posterity will pass an equitable judgment upon the events which may flow from a devotion as patriotic as it is honorable.”⁶⁰

On July 23, 1806, Miranda wrote to Admiral Cochrane in similar terms. He said that his failure to gather larger reinforcements at Trinidad was due to a belief that this island would ultimately be delivered to Spain and to a feeling that England was not cordially coöperating with him. He expressed hope that the people who had gathered on the Venezuelan coast would furnish him with the means to start the emancipation of Spanish America. “I fully rely on your naval assistance,” added Miranda, “to support me on those points.”⁶¹

During the night of August 1 the expedition reached the bay of Coro. A heavy sea prevented an attack from being made until early dawn on the morning of August 3. The vanguard of Miranda’s forces, which was led by Colonels de Rouvray and Downie and Lieutenant Beddingfield, all of whom had served under the English flag, soon drove the Spanish soldiers from the beach and stormed a battery. By the aid of boats from the English vessels another contingent was landed; thus the Spaniards were driven out of the fort and the town of Vela de Coro. The Spanish flag was replaced by the insurgent banner. Miranda soon sent out messengers bearing flags of truce who were to offer protection to those inhabitants that would return to their homes. When the town of Coro was captured it was found to be almost deserted.⁶² According to the Spanish commander, Miranda lived near a city gate, in a state of perpetual vigilance, surrounded by his most trusted followers, and with a steed constantly saddled.⁶³

⁶⁰ July 23, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 51.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Marshall, X, 404-5; Biggs, pp. 115-17. ⁶³ Rojas, *El general Miranda*, p. 227.

The commander issued a proclamation to the South Americans which was fastened on the doors of churches and public buildings. In it he ordered all officials who were exercising authority on behalf of the Spanish Government to cease their functions at once. Local courts were meantime to exercise governmental authority. Any individuals who might aid Spain were to be viewed as traitors, while persons deserting the Spanish service were to be rewarded. Officials of the colonial treasury were asked promptly to transfer public funds to the new administrators. Male citizens between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five were summoned to the Colombian colors. The standard of national independence was to be displayed in the most conspicuous places. Colombian citizens were to wear cockades in their hats. For the time being a general assembly was to be formed; and a promise was given that eventually a permanent government would be erected. The public good, said Miranda, "is the supreme law."⁶⁴ A Spanish translation of Viscardo's *Lettre aux Espagnols-Américains* was distributed among those inhabitants who could be reached.⁶⁵ Nevertheless Miranda's efforts to recall his fellow countrymen were futile; and, as no supplies of any kind were found in the town, he decided to evacuate Coro and to return to Vela de Coro.⁶⁶

Though by this time Miranda must have suspected that his expectations of substantial aid from compatriots were misplaced, yet he still hoped to secure effective assistance from English commanders. On August 8 he sent an emissary with letters asking for aid to Admiral Cochrane, to Admiral Dacres at Jamaica, and to Sir Eyre Coote, governor of Jamaica. Coote responded that, not having received "any order or advice" from his government about Miranda's undertaking, it was utterly impossible for him to render any assistance. Admiral Dacres replied that as the forces at his disposal were small and as he had not received the slightest intimation from his government, he could do no more than to guard Miranda

⁶⁴ Biggs, p. 131. ⁶⁵ Mir. MSS., vol. 51. ⁶⁶ Molini's Journal, *ibid.*, vol. 52.

by a cruiser.⁶⁷ Admiral Cochrane, an ardent well-wisher of the enterprise, had already written to Miranda that, as his government had not vested him with power, he could do no more than to protect the expedition by a small squadron.⁶⁸

On July 13, 1806, Earl Howick, first lord of the admiralty, wrote William Windham that he had read Cochrane's letter to Lord Spencer describing his relations with Miranda. Howick did not feel inclined to pass a favorable judgment upon these proceedings. He expressed grave doubts as to the policy of "embarking in this scheme." Even if it were desirable in other respects he asked, "can we spare the force that will be necessary to give it a reasonable chance of success? You say 3,000 men for Buenos Aires—Cochrane talks of 5,000 to support Miranda. To man such a force in addition to what will be required for Sicily, seems to me impossible without leaving ourselves without the power of acting anywhere else, if an opportunity should present itself, and without reducing too much our army at home if the threat of invasion should be renewed." ⁶⁹ This species of argument evidently had great force with the Grenville cabinet. At a meeting two days later its members reached an agreement to disapprove of the decision taken by Cochrane to aid Miranda with "ships under his command, and even to conclude a treaty with him; and that he should be directed to take no steps by which His Majesty can be further committed in that enterprize." ⁷⁰

The Spaniards in Venezuela had meantime been making preparations to resist the threatened invasion. On the very day when Miranda landed his picture was cast upon the ground by the hangman, trodden under foot, and ignominiously burned. Juan de Salas, commander of the district of Coro, had dispatched messengers to the adjacent towns to solicit aid. He aimed to station soldiers so as to prevent the filibusters from penetrating into the elevated regions where he believed that there were many discontented slaves who would follow the

⁶⁷ Robertson, *Miranda*, p. 388. ⁶⁸ July 30, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 51.

⁶⁹ Add. MSS., 37, 847, f. 255. ⁷⁰ *Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue*, VIII, 236.

revolutionary banner. The forces gathered for the defense of the province were gradually increased by soldiers who were hastily recruited from Indians and negroes. According to the figures of the Spanish commander, by August 8, 1806, this motley army amounted to at least fifteen hundred men.⁷¹ With this force Salas cautiously followed Miranda to Vela de Coro; there he stationed some of his followers on the sand hills near the invaders. On August 12 they captured Captain Johnson of the *Leander* with a number of seamen.⁷² Captain General Vasconcelos led forces amounting to perhaps four thousand men from the capital city toward Valencia where he proposed to form a military camp. According to one observer, all persons who had not taken up arms against the invaders were to be considered as traitors. Signs are not lacking, however, to show that here and there some colonists secretly sympathized with the filibusters.⁷³

Two letters that Miranda received from Admiral Cochrane at this juncture indicate plainly that commander's views. One of these letters marked private and confidential and dated at Tortola, July 30, ran thus:

"After the part I have taken to support the success of your Plans I hope you are convinced that I have your interest much at heart.

"From my late accounts from home it appears that you have some warm friends in the present ministry but I fear that you have also some that are not so much so as I could wish.

"Situated as I am now, I cannot openly act, *but secretly* will give you all the assistance in my power—I will take care that the Enemy's Ships do not annoy you unless they come with a superior force, but my authority extends no farther as Government altho informed by me of your being on the Coast have not vested me with powers to afford you aid.

⁷¹ Rojas, *El general Miranda*, pp. 209-16.

⁷² Molini's Journal, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁷³ *London Chronicle*, 1806, p. 444; Casas to Godoy, Aug. 26, 1806, A. G. I., audiencia de Caracas, 133-4-9.

"I must also limit the Supplies of Provisions but hope before this that you are in the midst of Plenty on the Main—Should the British Govt. charge what has been already supplied to my private account I trust that when you have it in your power that the same will be repaid.

"Capt. Sayer who will deliver this has my instructions to render you every assistance he can compatible to my limited powers." ⁷⁴

In a postscript the admiral wrote: "Destroy this and the Enclosed." In the inclosed epistle, which was also dated July 30, Cochrane cordially wished Miranda success: "It gives me pleasure," he wrote, "to see that you are likely to be supported from Eng. You will observe that Mr. Turnbull's meeting took place the day after the one my Brother had with Lords Grenville and Moira on the 6th. I am vexed at the little support you have met with and am sorry that I can afford you no more." In conclusion he urged the filibuster "to secure a strong post" that could be held until assistance arrived from England. Inclosed in this letter was an extract from an epistle that the admiral had just received from his brother Colonel Cochrane Johnstone which ran as follows: "I am to be with Lords Moira and Grenville tomorrow about Genl. Miranda. I am endeavoring to prevail upon them to render him immediate assistance—Lord Melville is keen about it and Davison and I are hard at work for him." ⁷⁵ These letters show that persons in England who were interested in the execution of Miranda's plans were pleading with English statesmen to give him immediate and effective aid.

In view of the increase in the enemy's forces, the reduction in numbers of the attacking party, the lack of assistance from the Indians, and the impracticability of securing water for the squadron, on August 13 General Miranda held a council of war. This council, composed of that general, D. Campbell, William Gagehall, and De Rouvray, agreed that the expeditionary force should move its position to another part of the

⁷⁴ Mir. MSS., vol. 51.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Continent not far distant where they could hold a port against the enemy until the aid expected from English officials could be received. However, as any other position on the Venezuelan coast appeared to the council untenable, it decided to evacuate Vela de Coro.⁷⁶ Hence the commander in chief ordered the invaders to depart. "At 10 P.M.," recorded Molini, "the General and suite embarked on board the *Lily*, and at 12 the whole of the Forces were on board, altho' we had been much impeded by a very violent rain."⁷⁷ Shortly after the expedition left the Venezuelan coast, the Spanish officials at Coro started an inquest to ascertain the identity of those persons who had encouraged or harbored the invader. Thousands of pesos were subscribed by Venezuelans to pay for the head of "Miranda the Traitor."⁷⁸

At the island of Aruba the revolutionist made a brief sojourn. Though apparently he was not much affected by the sufferings of his men who were disheartened, scantily clad, and poorly fed, yet he doubtless keenly felt the loss of prestige. Besides, he received a friendly letter from Admiral Cochrane that contained some disheartening news:

"I think it highly proper to inform you that by recent Instructions received from England, I am directed to limit the assistance you are to receive from me, to protection from the Naval Force of the Enemy; to prevent succours being landed; and to secure your re-embarkation in the event of your being obliged to leave the shore.

"I am further directed to send by a fast sailing Vessel, full details of the situation in which the Continent of South America now stands, in order that His Majesty's Ministers may finally decide as to the future measures they may take.

"In consequence of the above, a schooner attends Capt. Dundas of the *Elephant* to Coro which Schooner will receive on board your dispatches and immediately proceed to England.

⁷⁶ Minute of the council of war, Aug. 13, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁷⁷ Molini's Journal, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁷⁸ Rojas, *El general Miranda*, pp. 221-23; Figueredo, "Para Pagar la cabeza del 'Traidor Miranda,'" in *El Cojo Ilustrado*, XX, 654-55.

"I think it proper to give you this early information lest you should be led to expect a Military Force to arrive for your support—a circumstance I am ignorant of being in contemplation of His Majesty's Government, but should any arrive, you may depend on its being forwarded to you without loss of time." ⁷⁹

The direction in which the thoughts of some English statesmen were occasionally turning is shown by an extract of a letter from Windham to Grenville dated September 11, 1806:

"I cannot but feel a strong conviction of the truth of the opinions contained in the Letter which you sent me from Hislop, and a great longing that a part of the force we are now disposing of, was applied, not to the revolutionizing, but to the obtaining possession of a part of the Spanish Settlements in S. America." ⁸⁰

Miranda was disposed to draw instructive lessons from his experiences. In a letter to Cochrane he declared that he had "ascertained with precision what the favorable sentiments of the inhabitants are toward us; and how much they detest the oppressive Government under which they groan at present. I have no doubt after this trial, of what we could with certainty obtain, if a small land force could be collected, before succours arrive into this Province, either from France or Spain." ⁸¹ Miranda's hope of immediate English coöperation must have declined, however, when on September 22, 1806, Captain Dundas of His Majesty's ship *Elephant* warned him that, if he did not leave Aruba for Trinidad at once, English naval protection would be entirely withdrawn, and that Cochrane would furnish no more provisions than those which were needed to carry his followers "to some port of safety." ⁸²

Yet, stimulated by news that he had received from Admiral Cochrane of the efforts of friends to secure aid for him from

⁷⁹ Sept. 11, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁸⁰ Copy, Add. MSS., 37, 487, f. 113.

⁸² Castlereagh, VII, 421-22.

⁸¹ Sept. 19, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

the English cabinet, Miranda now addressed letters to Lords Grenville and Melville. Two passages from the plea to Melville dated September 19 will indicate his mood:

"My Right Honble. friend Mr. Vansittart, with whom I have kept a constant correspondence on the same subject, from the moment I quitted England in Sepr. last by the consent and agreement of the late Ministry—will give to your Lordship an exact account of our proceedings in this expedition, I hope the small succours that we want at this present moment will be given to us by your interposition, and I have no doubt from the experience we have now acquired in the Country itself, by the intercourse and communication we had for some time with the inhabitants, that success will attend our present efforts, and rescue the New World from becoming tributary and Vassals of the despots of France.

"I will not trouble your Lordship with any reflections about the great consequences that these plans if carried into execution may produce in favour of Great Britain and Mankind, when I know that your Patriotic and Political Sentiments are similar and congenial to mine."⁸³

The *Leander* reached Grenada on October 21, 1806. There many of Miranda's followers discarded their revolutionary uniforms. The disbanded men were paid only a part of the wages that they had been promised. In vain did they appeal to their former chief for financial assistance. He was made defendant in a suit by the owner of the *Trimmer* who wished to be paid for the use of his vessel. An incidental result of this expedition was that its projector became bankrupt. Long after his followers dispersed at Grenada, he was harassed by requests for the payment of expenses incurred because of his ill-starred cruise in the Caribbean Sea.⁸⁴

In a letter to the President, Stephen Sayre chided Jefferson because he had not accepted some "noble offers" that he alleged Miranda had made to him in Washington. Sayre said

⁸³ Mel. MSS., f. 44.

⁸⁴ Biggs, pp. 204-16, 221-29, 233-37; Miranda to Ogden, Oct. 3, 1809, Mir. MSS., vol. 61.

that Miranda's "ideas are lofty—his schemes magnificent—his intelligence uncommon and correct—and I believe his virtue is above the reach of corruption." Yet this sympathizer expressed a fear that, if the revolutionist was forced to get aid from England, that nation would induce the people of Spanish America to become the enemies of the United States and would carve out kingdoms there for her princes. "The policy of Miranda, if aided by us," he continued, "is decidedly to adopt the representative system, throughout the whole Continent—to have ambassadors, from each confederation of states, who shall meet in some central part and prevent, if possible, any misunderstandings that may arise in the Union."⁸⁵

In the British West Indies comment upon Miranda's activities varied according to the good or ill success of his expedition. On September 2, 1806, the *Barbadoes Mercury and Bridgetown Gazette* declared that Miranda would "demonstrate to the world, that though his enterprise has been called rash by some, Quixotic by others, and by all deemed dangerous, yet it is in his power to take and preserve a position on Terra Firma." On November 4, however, this gazette said that "it does not now appear, as far as the events and issue of his recent expedition are developed, that he is possessed of those superior virtues or, if we may be allowed the expression, those vicious excellencies, which are necessary to give energy and effect to a bold undertaking."

Early in November, 1806, Miranda decided to dispatch De Rouvray to London. Molini wrote in his journal that this agent was sent in order that their leader might obtain "immediate succours or a categorical answer" respecting the intentions of the English ministers.⁸⁶ On November 3 Miranda wrote to Sir Evan Nepean, Earl St. Vincent, and Lord Grenville. A significant portion of the letter to St. Vincent runs as follows: "I hope that at this present moment your influence

⁸⁵ Nov. 15, 1806, Jeff. MSS., series 2, vol. 77.

⁸⁶ Molini's Journal, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

shall not be wanted for the purpose of carrying into execution those benevolent Plans, that the administration in which your Lordship was so conspicuous a member had formed for the welfare of Great Britain and the happiness of mankind." In a confidential letter addressed to Vansittart on the same day Miranda thus mentioned De Rouvray's mission :

"I pray you to listen to him with the same attention that you would give me if I were present ; and to introduce him to those ministers of His Majesty whom you judge it proper that he should see at the present moment. Send me a positive response in regard to the future fate of this expedition in order that I may be able to retain here the persons who are voluntarily devoted to this generous enterprise and who are awaiting with impatience a definitive conclusion. There is no need for me to depict to you my personal position ; I rely with confidence upon your honor and your friendship. You have been the confidant of my secrets and my pure intentions. Give me your advice and extricate me from the disagreeable and dangerous position in which I am placed at the present moment." ⁸⁷

The quandary of the English ministers at this juncture can only be comprehended by noticing the changes that Home Popham had wrought in the Viceroyalty of la Plata. In April, 1806, Popham, who had been vindicated by a parliamentary committee and was now in command of the English naval forces at the Cape of Good Hope, decided, without the authorization of his government but with the aid of some regular soldiers under General Beresford, to make an attack on Montevideo and Buenos Aires. Reports which he had received about the defenseless condition of those ports had convinced him that they could easily be conquered and that large markets would thus be opened for English manufacture. On the eve of his departure from St. Helena for La Plata the English Commander wrote a letter from the *Diadem* to Lord Castlereagh to

⁸⁷ These letters of Nov. 3, 1806, to St. Vincent and Vansittart are found in W. O., 1/1113.

explain that his project had "not arisen from any sudden impulse, or the immediate desire of gratifying an adventurous spirit," but as the outcome of a plan that he had previously framed at the request of Lord Melville for "a general emancipation in South America, and that the great organ of action in this undertaking" was General Miranda.⁸⁸ Early on the morning of June 25 English warships entered the estuary of La Plata River, and two days later scarlet clad soldiers took possession of Buenos Aires. To Miranda, whom he supposed to be in England, on July 20 Popham sent an intriguing epistle:

"Here we are in possession of Buenos Ayres, the finest Country in the World, and from what I see of the disposition of the Inhabitants, I have no doubt if Ministers would accede to your Propositions and send you here, that your Plan would take as well from this side as from the other, try my friend to come out. I have written to Sir Evan Nepean who is the only person I recollect to have been particularly interested in the Subject; Davison you will of course see, as well as Lady Popham and they will give you all the Information they have. I am so occupied that I scarce know what to do first. I wish you were here. I like the South Americans prodigiously. God bless you my dear General."⁸⁹

In a letter to Miranda, inclosing this epistle, Turnbull wrote in these words:

"I have shewn it to our good Friend Mr. Vansittart—The Influence and Consequence of his party are most materially increased, by the Death of Mr. Fox. Lord Grenville, I am sure is well attached to you, and to your cause. Sir Evan Nepean has no Prospect of getting again into Power—and Mr. Fox's Party, particularly Lord St. Vincent's, were so inveterate against Sir Home Popham, that the House of Commons would not give him a Vote of Thanks for the Conquest of the Cape of Good Hope and on the contrary another Naval Officer was immediately sent thither to supercede Sir Home—Fortunately

⁸⁸ April 30, 1806, *ibid.*, 1/161.

⁸⁹ Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

for him, he had left the Cape, before his Successor arrived, and as he has now been so successful and Lord Grenville's Party totally predominates, I should hope that they will not longer take a Part against him. * * * The Manufacturing Towns are anxious to send you Supplies, and Lord Auckland, the President of the Board of Trade, is desirous to give you every Encouragement that I can suggest."⁹⁰

Popham sent a dispatch to the English Government to announce the conquest of Buenos Aires. He asked that he should be speedily reënforced. In reply the admiralty approved "the judicious, able, and spirited conduct" of his officers and marines but disapproved of the attack on South America because it had been undertaken without the sanction of the government.⁹¹ Still, when Vansittart transmitted Miranda's letters to Lord Grenville, he was evidently given the impression that the government might decide "to take a very active Part in wresting South America out of the hands of the Spaniards" but that it wished to have the South Americans show their "disposition to come forward."⁹² After Home Popham was recalled for leaving his station without orders, in vain did he plead in extenuation of his proceedings the fact that William Pitt had entertained designs upon the Spanish Indies. Although the English ministers tardily decided to dispatch an expedition under Generals Crawford and Whitelocke to conquer southern South America, yet this ill-considered plan failed largely because of the heroic resistance of the citizen soldiers of Buenos Aires.⁹³

The initial success which attended Popham's attack on La Plata indicates that if Miranda had secured firm possession of strategic positions in northern South America, the English Government might have decided to aid him by armed force. Though citizens of the United States and at least one federal

⁹⁰ Sept. 17, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁹¹ *Minutes of a Court Martial*, pp. 54-56, 69, 70.

⁹² Turnbull to Cochrane, inclosure in Cochrane to Miranda, Nov. 30, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁹³ *Proceedings of a Court Martial*, I, appendix, pp. v. xxii, xxv-xxvii.

official promoted the enterprise, and though the negligence of the American Government permitted the *Leander* to sail from New York, yet Miranda's attack on Venezuela in 1806 was in some respects more of a British than an American enterprise. Although perhaps they were not fully aware of it, English ministers furnished some two thousand pounds to meet the expenses of the attempt to revolutionize Venezuela in 1806.⁹⁴ When Miranda attacked Coro more than one-half of his invading army was composed of men who had lived under the British flag. It is clear that without the supplies which were obtained from English commanders in the West Indies the *Leander* could scarcely have kept on her cruise. Further, Miranda would evidently have found difficulty in withdrawing from the Venezuelan coast without a shield of English vessels.

In a negative way England had actually encouraged the filibusters. By neglecting for a time to give instructions to her servants in the West Indies to withhold supplies and munitions from Miranda, she gave her implied sanction to the attempt to revolutionize South America. In a speech in Parliament on December 19, 1806, Lord Castlereagh pertinently asked why the ministers had not decided "one way or other on a question obviously interesting to the British empire? So far was government from making up their mind on it," he added, "that our commanders were constantly obliged to reply to the applications made to them for support that they would write home for instructions; and at last we contributed our aid by sending a few light vessels to convoy the expedition."⁹⁵

It is clear that Miranda's force was altogether too small for the huge task which he had in mind. In 1808 Sir Arthur Wellesley estimated that an attack on northern South America should not be undertaken with less than ten thousand regular soldiers. Further, the warnings sent to South America by Yrujo as well as Miranda's delays in the West Indies had

⁹⁴ Turnbull to Miranda, June 5 and Sept. 20, 1806, Mir. MSS., vol. 52.

⁹⁵ Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, VIII, 79.

given the Spaniards a splendid opportunity to make preparations to repulse the invaders. Although some fellow countrymen sympathized with Miranda, yet at this juncture many others were either faithful to their King or indifferent to a change of masters.

As a Venezuelan historian suggests, perhaps the dominant creole aristocrats opposed Miranda because they believed that his endeavors were subsidized by English gold.⁹⁶ In any case, the appearance of a small attacking force did not induce the people of northern South America to rise in arms against the Spaniards. Yet if that attempt had been strongly supported by English soldiers, its success might conceivably have led to the separation of all the Spanish continental colonies in America from the Motherland. In the wake of such a transformation English merchants would have developed an extensive and profitable commercial intercourse. In fact Miranda's attack on Venezuela incited an astute French agent named De Pons to warn his government that France was the only nation which could protect the Spanish colonial Empire against the ambitious designs of England.⁹⁷

As a counterblast to this attempt to revolutionize Venezuela, in 1807 the Spanish Government published in South America a "Portrait and Biography of the Traitor Miranda."⁹⁸ This denunciation contained an interpretative account of the activities of that "wicked man." The Spanish Government stigmatized President Jefferson as a "disloyal friend of Spain" who overlooked Miranda's activities "in order that he might recruit some two hundred men." It declared that warnings dispatched by the vigilant envoy Yrujo enabled Spanish officials to prepare to receive Miranda as he deserved. That "miserable person, in order not to lose everything and to tempt

⁹⁶ Gil Fortoul, "El primer fracaso de Miranda," in *El Cojo Ilustrado*, XV, 325.

⁹⁷ "Mémoire sur la cession de la capitainerie générale de Caracas à la France," 1806, A. A. E., Colombie, I.

⁹⁸ Medina, *Historia y bibliografía de la imprenta en Buenos-Aires*, pp. 263-64.

fate," attacked the Venezuelan coast with a ridiculous force. After the repulse of his first attack the traitor then undertook "to visit the islands of his friends the English, beseeching aid and offering South America as a reward." As an explanation of the repulse of Miranda's second attack, the statement was made that "the Spaniards were vigilant at all points and the Spanish Americans everywhere detested the memory of such a wicked son."



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